The Belfast Doctor



The POW Diaries of Dr. Frank Murray

Prepared by Carl Murray

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Editor's Note

These memoirs are based on the writings of my father, Frank Murray, and describe in his own words his experiences as an officer in the Royal Army Medical Corps during the Second World War when he was a prisoner of war of the Japanese. The chapters cover the period of his imprisonment in the Changi POW camp in Singapore, his transportation to Japan and his subsequent imprisonment in the POW camps at Yakumo, Muroran and Raijo (known to the POWs as Nisi Asibetsu) on the northern Japanese island of Hokkaido. The diary entries were written in the form of letters to my mother, his fiancée at the time, Eileen O'Kane. Because the letters were intended for Eileen, Frank did not mention the cruelties he witnessed in the camps. I believe that my father's love for my mother combined with his strong religious faith contributed to his survival. However, although the diary contained constant expressions of my father's love for my mother, I realise that this does not always make for good reading and so some of them have been removed. However, I have attempted to stick to Frank's historical account of captivity. Wherever possible I have attempted not to introduce any new text when editing. Furthermore, I have corrected some spellings where I have good evidence that words were mis-spelt in the original text. Any reader wanting further information about Frank Murray should consult the website, https://www.thebelfastdoctor.info for a more complete account of his wartime experiences.

Carl Murray

Acknowledgments

I would like to thank my sisters Villana, Edmée and Josette, as well as my brother Paul for their continuous support over the many years that it took to complete this project. They all provided photographs and information that helped me to tell a remarkable story. Paul has undertaken his own personal journey of reconciliation and in 2017, with the help of the Japanese POW Research Network, he visited the sites of the former POW camps where our father was imprisoned; he and Villana also re-enacted Frank's long march from downtown Singapore to Changi. Paul is in the process of publishing a book about his experiences in following our father's journey. During the course of my own research I had the privilege to meet and talk to David Marshall, Keith Mitchell and Ted Rimmer, all of whom were fellow POWs with my father in Japan; all have since passed away. Over the years I have had numerous meetings with the late Dr Max Andler, the American doctor in the camps who knew my father well. I am grateful to Max's widow Valeda for granting me permission to reproduce a transcript of my interview with him. I am also grateful to the granddaughter of Gwilym Rowlands for allowing me to reproduce several of the group photographs he took in the camp after liberation.

This book is dedicated to the memory of
Frank and Eileen

Introduction

Francis (Frank) Joseph Murray was born on 4th December, 1912 in the room above his father's shop at 155 Oldpark Road, Belfast. Frank's father, Charles, was the son of a farmer from the townland of Cullion near Desertmartin. The story goes that Charles had come to Belfast with half-a-crown in his pocket towards the end of the 19th century and worked for a while in a bar near the docks. In 1896 he and his brother Daniel set up in business running a spirit grocer's shop at 155 Oldpark Road. Charles met his future wife Margaret McGrane (a teacher from Clones, Co. Monaghan) at Pettigo station on his way to a pilgrimage at nearby Lough Derg. Charles and Margaret were married in Tandragee on 26th June 1905 and had a family of eight children – five girls and three boys. All the children with the exception of the youngest, Anne, were born in the rooms above the shop on the Oldpark Road. In the early 1920s Charles bought a house, "Beechwood", at 95 Cliftonville Road and that became the family's residence.

Frank was educated at the (by then) interdenominational Jaffe School on the Cliftonville Road as well as at St Patrick's Christian Brothers Primary School in Donegall Street before moving to St Mary's Christian Brothers Secondary School in Barrack Street when he was 11, although at one stage he was sent back to St Patrick's due to poor performance. It was while he was at school that he obtained a scholarship to learn Irish at the Donegal Gaeltacht in Ranafast in 1929. There he met and fell in love with Eileen O'Kane, a girl from the Springfield Road, Belfast who was a boarder at the St Louis School, Kilkeel. Frank and Eileen both went on to become students at Queen's University, Belfast although Frank failed all of his first-year exams due to the amount of time he devoted to Eileen. At Queen's Frank studied medicine but also found time to enjoy many sporting activities including tennis, cricket, rugby, hockey, athletics and gaelic football – he was a shot-putting champion and he played gaelic for Queen's in the 1935/36 Sigerson Cup final held at Corrigan Park, Belfast. Eileen graduated in July 1934 and Frank in July 1937. It was around the time of Frank's graduation that Eileen decided she did not want to continue seeing Frank and broke off their relationship. Following a summer as a House-Surgeon at the Mater Hospital, Belfast, in October 1937 Frank took a job as a GP in Birmingham, working for Dr Maurice Macsherry in his practice on the Summer Hill Road in the Ladywood district of the city. The salary was £312 per annum.

When war broke out in September 1939 Frank wanted to enlist in the regular army but was told that, as a qualified doctor, he should wait until he was contacted by the Royal Army Medical Corps about a commission as an officer. Finally, in December 1939 Frank became a Lieutenant in the RAMC and began his career in the army. His first posting was to India and he arrived in Rawalpindi in February 1940 to start work at the Military Hospital. However, soon afterwards Frank had a bout of rheumatic fever and he was hospitalised for six weeks. As part of his recuperation he was posted to the hill station of Khaira Gali some 30 miles northeast of Rawalpindi and away from the intense summer heat of the city. While in Khaira Gali he was the Medical Officer for a battery of the Royal Artillery stationed at the nearby hill station of Murree. He finally returned to Rawalpindi in October 1940. Having had no contact with Eileen for several years, in December 1940 he decided to send her a card from the Officers' Mess at Rawalpindi where he was stationed. Eileen's reply reached him on 15th February 1941 and they started corresponding with Frank writing twelve-page letters every 6 or 7 days.

In February 1941 Frank was made 2nd in Command of the 27th Field Ambulance, part to the 9th Indian Division, and promoted to the rank of Acting Major. From his letters to Eileen it is clear that he loved working with the diverse group of soldiers who made up the 27th Field Ambulance as they participated in training exercises and sports activities. He was always scrupulously fair and stood up for the weak; as a result he commanded the respect of his men. Two months later the 27th was posted to Malaya and the whole unit set out across India. Along the way, Frank and his men had lunch with Mir Osman Ali Khan, the last Nizam of Hyderabad and the richest man in the world at the time. The unit boarded a ship at Madras on 16th April 1941 and spent three days crossing the Bay

of Bengal to reach Penang. They travelled by train to their final destination of Ipoh in the Malayan state of Perak. In June the 27th Field Ambulance moved to Kroh in the north of Perak, two miles from the border with Thailand. Frank definitely preferred the climate in Malaya to that in India and he enjoyed being fit again, thanks to all the exercises and sport. On 5th July 1941 Frank received a long-awaited cable from Eileen – she had agreed to marry him. In the same month he even managed to obtain green and white hooped football jerseys for the unit's football team so that they had the same strip as his beloved Belfast Celtic team from home. However, at the end of July 1941 the unit had orders to move again, this time 470 miles southeast from Kroh to Beserah, near the town of Kuantan on Malaya's east coast. Frank enjoyed being based next to the sea; he loved going for walks along the beach and long-distance swims in the warm waters of the South China Sea, even though he once had to survive a severe sting from a jellyfish when he was half a mile from shore. On the 19th August the camp was visited by Yadavindra Singh, the Maharaja of Patiala, and referred to as 'father' by the Sikhs in the unit. The men had practice drills to train them to cope with enemy attacks and went on numerous manoeuvres. They always performed well and Frank was justifiably proud of them. Their skills were put to the test on the morning of Monday, 8th December 1941 when the Japanese landed at Kota Bharu in northern Malaya. Frank received the message: "War declared; naval bombardment; coastal landing by enemy". The RAF station at nearby Kuantan was home to 60 Squadron and their 8 Blenheim Mark IV bombers took off for Kota Bharu at 06:30 that morning to attack the Japanese forces. Later that day Frank described treating and giving his own blood to someone who could have been one of the first British casualties of the Pacific war, Albert W. J. Beagley, a gunner on a Blenheim that was severely damaged by shrapnel. The next day the Japanese bombed and machine-gunned Frank's camp and the following day his RAF patient was evacuated. Over the course of the next month, as the war in Malaya escalated, Frank and the 27th were kept busy dealing with casualties. On 16th January 1942 Frank was appointed Commanding Officer of a Mobile Ambulance Convoy and had to leave his beloved 27th Field Ambulance to travel to Singapore to take up his new post. He witnessed the Japanese bombing raids first-hand, all the while sending letters and telegrams to Eileen to tell her that he was safe and well. His last letter to Eileen was written on 30th January 1942. Singapore was surrendered to the Japanese on 15th February 1942.

Although Frank's letters to Eileen ceased following the capture of Singapore in February 1942, he kept a diary in the form of daily letters to Eileen with the intention of sending them all at once when he was finally freed. What follows is an edited version of those letters.

Chapter 1:
1942

Singapore,
February 15th 1942
(Sunday)

My own darling,

It is all over at last and we have surrendered to the Japs unconditionally. The last few hours were awful, Eileen, but the grandest thing I have ever known was to hear our guns putting up that final barrage. We were right under the noses of those guns though their noise was deafening and was unceasing for hours.

This morning I burned all your letters and you know what a heartbreak that was to me — *your* letters with every single word of them so precious to me. I also had to burn a letter I had written to you and another I had begun. I wrote to you every day during the campaign — sometimes it was only a line but it was something from my heart and with it went all my love. It is quiet and peaceful here in the shadow of St Andrew's Cathedral; we have made a fire and the men are preparing the evening meal. All my ambulance cars are here in the grounds and they look tired after the busy time they have had.

I am a prisoner of war and wondering what will happen to me. Where shall I be sent and what will happen to me I do not know, but I *do* know that I shall come back again to you soon. Nothing can ever stop me coming back to you. I love you now as never before. I was not afraid once; I always did my duty and many times it was done under shellfire and aerial bombardment. Somehow I always felt that I was not meant to die; I felt that He was watching over me because you had asked him to do so. I was at Mass this morning at our Cathedral and also at Communion. The church still stands though many buildings around are in ruins. God bless you Eileen.

Monday 16th February 1942
We have not become real prisoners yet and today we were working. We evacuated a hospital of military patients. Singapore presented a strange sight; streets deserted save for little groups of terror-stricken Chinese cowering in doorways; Japanese flags waving from almost every point; Japanese sentries at every corner with fixed bayonets. We are still in the Cathedral grounds with other Medical units and have not been interfered with in any way. My darling, I was nearly killed today when a huge piece of shrapnel fell at my feet — an ammunition dump exploded accidentally. The boys are cheerful today and the gramophone has been going all day long.

Tuesday 17th February 1942
The troops were all marched off to the prison camp yesterday, but that was *nothing* compared with the sad sight I saw today when all the civilian men, women and children (Europeans) were marched through the streets to their camp. All day long a sad procession of Chinese has paraded along the streets carrying all their belongings on their backs, the tiny children walking for miles under the hot sun. It just made me think — I could not bear to watch them at all. We have not been made prisoners yet and are still functioning each day as an ambulance unit. I love you.

Wednesday 18th February 1942
I brought patients today out to the prison camp at Changi and was agreeably surprised to see large bathing parties returning from a dip in the sea! I was reluctant to return to my home in Singapore behind the Cathedral railings. We are wondering when we shall be sent out to the camp too — I do not mind how soon because life is not

thrilling here and the washing facilities are poor. I sent you and father a note on January 30th with Mrs O'Callaghan and it has reached Colombo already! My constant thought is of you and for you because I know you will be worried about my safety. Oh if I could only let you know by some means that I am alive I should feel happier.

Thursday 19th February 1942
A parade of Japanese tanks today through the city. Some more work today but I am glad of it.

Friday 20th February 1942
My darling, at last I am to become a real Prisoner of War. Early tomorrow morning I shall march at the head of my men through the streets and away out to the prison camp about 14 miles away. I could have managed a lift in an ambulance car but I wanted to be with the men. Today we are preparing to move. You know that all my kit has been stolen — my Queen's blazer, all my civilian shirts, dressing gown. I still have my crucifix and statue thank God.

Saturday 21st February 1942
The long weary march is over and I still love you as I sit under this tree in Changi awaiting a piping hot meal which the boys are cooking in the open. My darling I shall never forget that march as long as ever I live. I was very fit and in good marching condition; heaven only knows what some of the others felt like at the end of the march! We were a weary lot when we reached here; we kept in perfect line the whole way, there was *no* straggling (and we were the exception). God bless you Eileen.

Sunday 22nd February 1942
I slept in a bed of leaves last night under the trees and oh it was grand. I had the awful experience of missing Mass today due to a mix up between Japanese and our time — the camp is run on Japanese time and that is 1 and ½ hours different from ours. I had a swim today and now I feel so much cleaner! I love you my darling more today. My unit is now disbanded and the officers and men scattered all over the camp. It is not really your idea or mine of a prison camp — everyone is living under a roof and it resembles a holiday camp. I am to spend the night with "Georgie" at his billet.

Monday 23rd February 1942
Have had an awful night with pain in my hip and fever. It seems that my old rheumatics are coming back again. Why do you love an old man like me with my rheumatism. I love you my darling.

Tuesday 24th February 1942
Yours truly is now a patient in a prison camp hospital with sub-acute rheumatism. I had a rotten night and today I had to go off to hospital. "Georgie" was very decent to me. The O.C. of the hospital is Irish; his wife is living in Strabane and he lived on the Cliftonville Rd. once upon a time. Name is McFarlane. I saw many familiar faces today.

Wednesday 25th February 1942
The usual sticky night after large doses of Sodii Salicylate! Still I feel better; thank God for it because it is not good being an invalid when a prisoner of war! Georgie came to see me today and his cheery face was a tonic for me. You will meet him some day, Eileen.

Thursday 26th February 1942

I feel grand today thank God. I had a rare feast today of chicken soup! I am being spoiled but I still love you. Georgie came again today and gave me a jelly (Chivers); a doctor has promised to make it for me tonight. The latter gave me two lovely books of poems by Tagore. You *must* read them some day my darling; they are wonderful, but not quite as good as my Irish poems!

Friday 27th February 1942

I was up today and oh how weak my old pins were! Col. Benson, my former C.O., came to visit me; he had an exciting time away out in an island near Singapore but all the Field Ambulance was safe and sound. The ever-faithful Georgie came again. I love you darling.

Saturday 28th February 1942

All my aches have gone and I am stronger already. Do you know that I spent 6 weeks in bed in Rawalpindi in February 1940 with a much less severe attack of rheumatism! The cause of my present bout was sleeping for two weeks under the open sky without a blanket. I used (to) wake up in the morning cold and stiff and covered with thick dew. God bless you my darling.

Sunday 1st March 1942

Was discharged from hospital this afternoon and found my way on foot to my new digs with dozens of other Medical Officers. Here I met James McNeilly of Ballymena; O'Driscoll of Cork; and O'Donnell of Dublin! The Irish were in force tonight at dinner – we were only a few of the crowd! I met James Ledingham, Harry Deverill, S., and Dickey D. – all former acquaintances. The latter pair joined up at Aldershot the same day as I did. The other two were good friends of mine in India.

Monday 2nd March 1942

Had a swim today and we met heaps of officers whom I knew in Kroh and in Kuantan. I heard of the sad fate of their gallant fellows; of Humphrey Thompson and how he was probably killed in the North when his battalion H.Q. were surrounded. I took things easy for the rest of the day. I love you my darling.

Tuesday 3rd March 1942

Another move today – this time to the medical mess. There are 50 of us all crowded into two small houses but its grand fun – except for the meals. We live on rice mostly, but thank God I like rice! We are allowed 1 water bottle per day – and no more. I am still in love with someone from the Springfield Road!

Wednesday 4th March 1942

At last I have found the chapel and it was Fr. Bourke led me to it. I met him at the swimming pagar this morning and I arranged to meet him at 8 p.m. The chapel was in ruins and nothing remained but the altar – no roof, no walls, no seats. There was Rosary and a hymn. I went to Confession afterwards and intend going to Mass in the morning. I met my good friend Mr. Wimsey today – he looks old and haggard since Ipoh days. His wife is on the same boat as Mrs. O'Callaghan and my note to you.

Thursday 5th March 1942

My darling, I had *3* Masses and a Communion all for you this morning. I was so very happy and so consoled as only He can console. There are three priests here – Fr. Bourke (Redemptorist), Father Whelan (Holy Ghost) and another Jesuit priest – the latter two are Irish and the former's mother hails from Belfast. I was at evening Rosary as usual. I had two swims today with McNeilly and O'Donnell – they are my two room mates. O'Driscoll is in hospital with lumbago!

Friday 6th March 1942
This evening after Rosary a tall young man came up to me, saluted, and asked me if I was Dr. Murray – what a Belfast accent he had. I had seen him at home many times but could not think of his name. When he mentioned that it was McBrinn I knew immediately that he lived on Cliftonville Rd! He is a wireless operator in the Royal Signals, was in the Dunkirk show and then sent to Malaya. It is strange going to Mass in the moonlit mornings and then see two candles burning from the open chapel. God bless you my dearest one.

Saturday 7th March 1942
The usual three Masses – oh what luxury for a prisoner of war! Two swims with the boys; evening Rosary; rice for all meals and nothing else! I am still "waekish" about the knees, but take things easy. I am unemployed as yet like so many medicals here. Frank McLaughlin joined the mess today; you remember I told you about him; how I met him in India and his wife (née Carr of the Glen Road).

Sunday 8th March 1942
Went to early Mass and back again to a later one with McLaughlin. I received orders to move tomorrow and start work as M.O. to an Anti-Tank Regiment. At Rosary and Benediction I met Wimsey and McBrinn and said farewell to them. I am going to another camp where alas there is no Chapel and no Mass. I shall be unhappy without Mass each morning; I have been so happy during the past week. Now I shall miss it so badly. I do need you and your prayers my own darling.

Monday 9th March 1942
I am now in my new billet – a wooden hut which I am sharing with Frank McLaughlin. He is a good chap. I have had a hectic day's work here but I loved it. We are wired in here as all the camps are now. I feel more like a prisoner of war now! Thank heavens the food is much better here and very palatable. The officers are all artillery men and are a nice crowd. I love you still.

Tuesday 10th March 1942
A quieter day but interesting in its way. I was out testing water this afternoon and met some Australians. What little news they had of the outside world was very good and it seems that at least you at home will soon have peace. So look out for me coming home soon! God bless you darling.

Wednesday 11th March 1942
Still fairly busy my darling, and still liking it. My room mate does make life pleasant. I had a hectic afternoon's darning yesterday and now I haven't got a single "holy" sock. I must do another big washing soon again! You should have seen me at the medical mess washing my shirts – I promise to do all the washing when we are married darling! Think of the misery I will save you; how much will you pay me? God bless you my dearest one.

Thursday 12th March 1942
More work, more sewing and darning. My darling I have salvaged a mashie and six new golf balls – given to me by Capt. Adams in the Cathedral grounds. So just you look out young woman! I have not wielded it much today but there is plenty of time. I saw a priest in the distance but could not speak to him. However McLaughlin says that Mass has been promised to us on Sunday at 8.30 a.m. I love you my darling.

Friday 13th March 1942

I forgot to tell you that I have grown a wonderful beard! It is over two weeks old and the finest in all of Singapore island; it is long and wavy and very black. It is the envy of all. You would not recognise me behind my whiskers! I promise to have it nicely shaved off by the time I reach Southampton. I dream of that wonderful day so often and I know that it will come soon. Went to visit the hospital today with McLaughlin – remind me to tell you of it!

Saturday 14th March 1942

My darling I had a dream about you last night – it was a long dream and I wanted it to last forever. As usual the scene was "Beechwood" and you were my queen. We were so very, very happy together in our home. My dreams are always happy even though I am a P.O.W. (prisoner of war). We are still wired in but are allowed on the main road. Of course, there are no shops or canteens; I have got $1.00 left in my pocket! I think things will improve. I love you my darling.

Sunday 15th March 1942

Went to Mass at 8.30 a.m. with Frank McL. My old friend Fr. Kennedy was the priest. I offered up my Mass and Communion for our own special intentions. Devotions are at 8.15 this evening – only Rosary – but that is wonderful and I shall go each evening. Alas the Mass time each morning clashes with my sick parade – the latter cannot be changed and so I have to miss all these graces each day.

Monday 16th March 1942

My darling it has rained the whole day long, but I like the rain because it reminds me of home! My Rosaries each night are always for you my own dearest one. I love you more and more as the days go by and I pray harder that we may be united soon again. I have always loved you my darling and I am so very sure that I always shall. There could never be anyone but you.

Tuesday 17th March 1942

St Patrick's Day! I never thought that our great Irish feast day would pass without Shamrock and all that it means to us. My heart was at home with you – you who are so Irish and so true. There are things which you might not understand about me and the army and which will be explained when I reach home again. I hope father will not worry about me as you must not worry.

Wednesday 18th March 1942

I am happy here in my own way except for one thing and that is worrying about you and what suffering I might be causing you.

Thursday 19th March 1942

Still raining but I still love you, my darling. I did a big washing today – shirts, shorts, socks and towels – and a sheet! I have left my duds out on the line in the rain. I do not mind being behind barbed wire because "stone walls do not a prison make" and I am thousands of miles away at home with you always. My crucifix, my Sacred Heart Statue and my Holy Water have survived the campaign and are resting peacefully on a wooden ledge in my wooden hut. You cannot imagine how precious these are to me in times like the present. All the non-Catholic officers have admired the beautiful crucifix and the statue – and I am so very proud of my treasures and so proud of being a Catholic. It seems the C. of E. padre is very anxious to lay hands on a cross, as he calls it, and hasn't got one yet but I would not part with my trove. I have got all your snaps darling but I have not displayed you on the wall yet because I am sharing my room with another officer. God bless you my dearest one.

Friday 20th March 1942

I have been given another job today and I thank God for some more work to do — I am the new Anti-Malarial Officer for this area. This means that my entire mornings will be occupied. I have my own squad of men and this means that we shall be busy dealing with breeding grounds in this division. We are the strangest prisoners of war in history; we have carefully wired ourselves in; we carefully guard ourselves from escaping with our own patrols; we see little of the Japanese; we are very well fed; we are living in ideal surroundings — the nicest in the island and the coolest. The days are never too hot or sticky; there is always a little breeze and the nights are cool. However, the sea bathing is still banned and we are more confined than before. I have made up my mind to make the best of things; I refuse to be depressed *because* I love you and because I am praying hard to Him.

Saturday 21st March 1942

Yesterday evening before Rosary time I tried out some shots with my Brassie; it was a big success and you will not have a chance with me when we play together at home! After Rosary I had my annual inoculation against Typhoid. So I had a sore arm today and felt awful but now I am better as the reaction has passed. I was thinking of you when I had my inoculation — I feel and have always felt it my duty to you to keep well. I am one of the few people, thank God, in this huge camp that has not had Dysentery. I am very particular about scrubbing my hands and nails often. I was thinking today that if you saw me how you would say that I am a real Franciscan friar with my brown-black beard! God has given so much to me — I do not crave for cigarettes or drink; I am happy without them; I have no craving for dainties to eat; I am contented with my present food; I have no hankering after a gay life — this quiet life suits me. I have lived for nearly a year in Malayan rubber plantations — this camp is a welcome change; it is spacious and often there are palm trees on either side of the road; there is a huge padang 20 yards from my door — football, hockey, cricket and baseball pitches — it is unbelievably pretty for a Prisoners of War camp. I have looked at you many times today and loved you more each time.

Sunday 22nd March 1942

This is always the happiest day of my week because it is *our* day and because I have Mass and Communion. Today these were offered up for your intentions and again I asked Him to give you everything you need and again I asked Him to tell you today when He visited you that I am well and safe and that I still love you. I had a most wonderful dream about you, my own darling, last night. I was meeting you for the first time after all these years and you were so real. I could see you smiling. My father and mother were both present in the room. The dreams bring me so near to you my darling. God bless you.

Monday 23rd March 1942

My darling, I have had another wonderful dream about you and your dear ones. I met your daddie and all the family in Oldpark Avenue waiting at a bus stop (which does not exist). I went up to daddie and said "Don't you know me? My name is Murray". I saw that he did not recognise me so I said that my name was Frank and that I was engaged to marry his daughter Eileen! He made quite a fuss of me and invited me over to Spring Villa to meet you there. We walked for a while and your Josephine[1] was ahead of me with the others — she turned back to me and said "You know, Frank, I have been praying for you every day that you would come safely home". I wish I could dream of you and all at home every night. You are in my thoughts all day long every day. I was outside the wire today doing Anti-Malarial work with my men when I met Father Kennedy and his boys in a coconut grove near the shore — they were gathering wood feverishly for our new chapel as this is officially our last day outside the wire without a very special pass. I promised to lend him my Irish Verses. I still cannot get to Mass except on Sundays and yet the chapel is only a few hundred yards away — I could cry with vexation sometimes. God bless you Eileen alannah.

[1] Josephine is Josephine O'Kane, a teacher of domestic science and Eileen's sister. After the war she married John Scullion and lived in Newcastle, Co. Down.

Tuesday 24th March 1942
I have been down by the sea today with my squad — we had a special pass. I am one of the privileged few who is allowed out and so I am not really a P.O.W. I did a terrific amount of sewing in the afternoon from 2–6pm and then a little after dinner. I have been hem stitching; herring bone, blanket stitching etc! My latest venture in patching my shirt has been a huge success and I believe that even you could not do patching so neatly! I have heaps more sewing and darning to do tomorrow afternoon; my day passes quickly — more quickly than anyone else in this camp. I find sewing very soothing and I can think of you all the time.

Wednesday 25th March 1942 — Feast of the Annunciation
My darling, what can I do about Mass? I crave to go daily and though it is a few yards away I cannot go. Last night I met my friend Capt. Ross who lived at Grik and was District Officer when I was up in Kroh. I told you all about Grik in one of my letters and how lovely it was — a miniature of London. Capt. Ross told me of his adventures down through Malaya during the campaign and the narrow escapes he had — he is a grand chap. I had another morning down near the beach among the palms and met Fr. Kennedy and his lads foraging among the Kampangs. I spent my whole afternoon and evening sewing — I am an expert needleman now! Yes, you look prettier than ever and truer than ever — no wonder I love you so.

Thursday 26th March 1942
Today has been the same as usual except that it is one day nearer to seeing you again. At the moment my typical day is like this — Reveille at 8 a.m. at dawn (really 6.30 a.m. Singapore time). I get up, have my morning tea, wash, and go off to my sick parade at 8.30 a.m.; this finishes at 9.30 a.m.; breakfast of rice, a little tinned meat, tea, sometimes a rice scone. Then off to Div. H.Q. at 10.30 am to meet the Anti-Malarial party; we march down to the scene of our labours, a soldier leading us with a small Japanese flag; work ends at 1 p.m., and we march back. Lunch (rice and tea) at 1.45 p.m. Then I go off to my room, sew and darn till 4 p.m.; tea; then more sewing till 6 p.m.! Dinner at 6.45 p.m. More rice and a little bully beef! I write to you at 7.30 p.m.; then I go off at 8.15 p.m. to Rosary with McLaughlin. It is dark again as we walk back. We have no lights and so we sit in darkness or moonlight on our verandah, and talk of home, of India, and *always* of food. I have a sort of a bath out of an old rusty tin and so to bed at 10.30 or 10 p.m. (10 hours sleep!).

Friday 27th March 1942
The Feast of Our Lady of Dolors — had a quiet morning and did not go out with my squad, but went out foraging in the afternoon with the Regiment down by the sea. We had quite a feast of coconut. I have thought about you a lot today — trying to imagine you as you are today, imagining what you will look like when we meet again at Southampton. I only hope that I shall not disgrace you by weeping for joy.

Saturday 28th March 1942
Another day nearer to you, my darling, and I love you today with all my heart and soul. I am sitting here on the verandah of my wooden abode looking out towards my Ireland and you — and what a perfect sunset it is, all red and golden. This morning I helped Fr. Kennedy carry back some wood for the chapel. McLaughlin and I were down in the coconut grove with the Anti-Malarial squad — we had a grand time by the sea. God bless you my dearest one.

(6 weeks since capitulation)
Sunday 29th March 1942 — Palm Sunday
My happiest day of the week is ending. Mass and Communion as usual and oh what a long talk I had with Him and the things I asked Him to give to you. I made a small album with the few Kroh snaps I had here. I am

wondering what *our* Malaya album looks like — you promised to have it ready by Christmas. That reminds me how lucky I was to get your Christmas letter even though I have burned it since. I have been thinking about your photograph and what happened to it — your little snap still lies next to my heart. I love you more today my darling. God bless you. (Palm trees everywhere but none at Mass!)

Holy Week

Monday 30th March 1942
Another day nearer to you. I did heaps of sewing in the afternoon — also washed a shirt! As I sat in this room sewing I wondered if you too were sewing hard at your supper cloth and I thought of all the things you have done for our bottom drawer. My thoughts turned to Donegal and our dances together there and I found myself humming an Irish hornpipe, my favourite. Then came a picture of you, the shy schoolgirl who was so terrified at my approach to her!

Tuesday 31st March 1942
Today was much the same as yesterday except that I am yours even more than ever. The hours and hours that I spend sewing and thinking of you each day. You will soon be on your way back home for Easter vacation and I know you will be happier there among your dear ones and mine too. You know I would die a thousand times rather than cause you any unhappiness and yet I feel that I am causing you worry and suffering — and oh how it greaves my heart. I shall be glad when you definitely hear that I am safe and sound. God bless you my darling. I am off to my Rosary.

Wednesday 1st April 1942
I had a glorious morning by the sea. The lads were fishing in a pond nearby and caught many carp. I met Fr. Kennedy again on the scrounge for his chapel — the latter is making good progress and should be partly ready for Easter Sunday. Read two "Saint" stories today. Major Pedley gave me my first sweet today! I love you my darling.

Thursday (Holy) 2nd April 1942
Had a grand morning down by the sea with my men. I had Fr. Kennedy down with me collecting wood for the chapel. I spent my morning writing out my official diary for the powers above (1st – 21st February) — my dates must be all mixed up but I managed somehow. I read three more "Saint" stories this afternoon. I have lots of sewing to do yet but that can wait. I still love you and adore you with all my heart and soul.

Good Friday 3rd April 1942
Today has been a holiday though not official. It is almost dark and we shall soon be off to Fr. Kennedy's special sermon tonight. I read a small book on Lawrence of Arabia and more Saint stories. I loved you and prayed for you more than ever. God bless you.

Holy Saturday 4th April 1942
We had a lovely Passion sermon last night and it brought me great consolation and made me realise what He suffered for me. What we too are suffering now, my darling, seems so small. Tomorrow will be Easter Sunday and oh how unlike Easter it is to me. Thank God I shall have Mass and Communion. Oh to be at home with you again at these times — or at any time. I do love you so very much and I could never love anyone but you.

Easter Sunday 5th April 1942 (7 weeks)
Easter has come and nearly gone — my thoughts were with you the whole day through. You may be sure there were no Easter eggs here — rice for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Have been selected to play cricket for the

Regiment tomorrow! Imagine darling, I could never manage a game of cricket during my year in Malaya — and now I am to play as a Prisoner of War. I am happy in a way but all my happiness is due to you.

Easter Monday 6th April 1942
We had a grand cricket match today though we were beaten. I was second top scorer and I was pleased with myself — for *your* sake. I found that I was as strong as ever and could run as fast as ever, in spite of my rice diet. Young lady, if you ever dare to show me a plate of rice again when we are married I shall scream! I find so many acts to do while a Prisoner of War during the day and yet to me life goes on unruffled. I know it must all end sometime; I am resigned to wait and give myself no false hopes as to when it will all end. I had a glorious cool morning near the sea working; I met Fr. Kennedy carrying a lovely basket chair he had found down by the shore.

Easter Tuesday 7th April 1942
I had a glorious morning by the sea and oh how sorry I shall be when my mornings outside the wire will cease. God bless you.

Wednesday 8th April 1942
It rained the whole afternoon and as I gazed out upon that torrent my thoughts went back home to you and all our dear ones. I think my last day by the sea has come and gone. However I shall carry on somehow. A party of our men and officers went into Singapore to work today and brought back some *bread — real bread!!* — and sweets. We had a royal feast this evening. And now I must be off to my prayers — have been going *alone* these nights.

Thursday 9th April 1942
I had a hard morning's work in the Sun — and not by the sea. Went to hospital in the afternoon with patients. I had a grand day — especially the short ride in the ambulance car. I saw McNeilly in his tent looking very miserable and depressed. You may thank the good God that your Frank is not living at the Medical Mess in the hospital grounds! God bless you and keep you.

Friday 10th April 1942
My "life" outside the wire has been mercifully extended and so I was free today again for the morning! I put all my sheets, blankets, and bed out to air in the afternoon! It is evening in Changi but it is only 11.30 am in Belfast where you are lucky enough to be. God bless you. I cannot write much due to paper scarcity and my small stock of ink.

Saturday 11th April 1942
My darling, you would surely blush if you knew how many times I have looked at you today! Frank McLaughlin my room mate has been transferred to another area of the camp and I am having a new room pal — non-medical. Had another grand morning outside the wire.

Sunday 12th April 1942
I have been so very happy after my usual Mass and Communion in the new thatched wooden church. I had a long chat with Capt. Ross after Mass — he was D.O. at Grik. Frank McL. went away this evening. I actually had a few fancy bars of chocolate when the officers came back from Singapore. God bless you.

Monday 13th April 1942
I had a wonderful dream about you last night my darling. I found myself walking up the path to Spring Villa; I went into your sitting room and there you were with Felix. In a moment you came running into my arms crying "Frank".

Tuesday 14th April 1942
Had a long chat with Fr. Kennedy last night after Rosary. I lent him my Irish Verses and he was so happy about this. I promised to lend him my lovely crucifix when his altar was completed. I was working today from 8 a.m. till 6.30 p.m. Walked to hospital and back with some men; met McNeilly there and other M.O.s. My darling I adore you.

Wednesday 15th April 1942
Had a night call last night — reminded me of my practice days at B'ham. Worked hard all day till 7.30 p.m. Got gloriously wet this afternoon returning from hospital.

Thursday 16th April 1942
Is there any need for me to tell you how much I love you in these days of captivity? I have had another hectic day and oh how leg weary I am. I do not mind working too hard *if* only we had something else to eat besides *rice*! God bless you my darling.

Friday 17th April 1942
Had some rest this afternoon thank God and I feel better for it. Am now reading "A Century of Love Stories" — they are grand but what can they teach me of love? I have discovered that I am *too soft*. I lent my lovely clock to the adjutant because *I* have a watch and he has no time piece. Weeks ago I gave away another precious watch, pair of braces and pair of shoes — somehow I have to share with others. God bless you my own dearest one.

Saturday 18th April 1942
I went to Confession last night after Rosary. There is a most lovely altar erected now and I had a long chat with the proud young man who planned it and built it out of *nothing*. He is a young gunner and he has a young wife at home — he says he wants to tell her all about his altar. I had another quiet day although I worked till 6 p.m. I had a dream last night that I landed in Eire and was interned there. You came to see me and made my happiness complete. I can hear "The Mountains of Mourne" on a gramophone somewhere in the camp and that brings me nearer home and to you. I think of the happiness that I knew in your company in the shadow of Mourne.

Sunday 19th April 1942 (9 weeks)
Fr. Kennedy had to cancel daily Mass because of lack of bread and wine — so now I do not feel that awful loss so much. Today I prayed especially hard for all your dear ones. God bless you my darling.

Monday 20th April 1942
After Rosary last night Fr. Kennedy and I had a walk around the playing fields and then sat under the starry sky for about an hour talking of home and heaps of grand things. We studied the stars and I showed him the Southern Cross, Orion, Jupiter, etc. I went with him today down to the shore on a foraging expedition for his Church. He told me that he was the only Jesuit in Malaya. I am very busy but thank God my work is showing results — no dysentery cases in my camp, no flies, few mosquitoes, and the sick rate falling. I love you with all my heart.

Tuesday 21st April 1942
I expect you are back to porridge at Omagh again. My darling, I am with you all day long in your prayers, in your class-room and in your games. Today has been a busy one but soon Capt. Young the *real* M.O. will be back again and I shall have relief. By the way he spent 2 months at Ardglass this time last year with some troops there. May God bless you my darling.

Wednesday 22nd April 1942

How quickly the days are speeding past and that means I am coming nearer to you. Another quiet day — I mean uneventful. I dreamed and thought of you as usual and I asked Him to send me back to you soon. May He bless you now and always.

Thursday 23rd April 1942

After Rosary last night, Fr. Kennedy invited me to his Mess to hear a gramophone recital. I enjoyed every minute of it even though I was badly bitten by mosquitoes. And now I have something to tell you. There was a cricket match today — trial match — and I was honoured to be included. The whole 11th Division was represented — they wanted to select a team to play the Australians next Sunday. Well, my darling, I was in wonderful form and was top scorer with 30 runs. I got great applause and praise from the other officers — but I wanted *you* to be there to see me play. I just smashed everything that came my way. I hope I am selected in the team because the "Aussies" have 3 Test match players playing — Oldfield, Barnett and Chipperfield[2]. God bless you my darling one.

Friday 24th April 1942

I have a new room companion — Capt. Burgess a dentist; he is small and thin, wears glasses, has a "studious" face and prominent teeth. He seems a good sort of chap. It has rained the whole day long and now it is growing dark at 8.10 p.m. I actually felt *cold* today. You could not imagine anyone feeling cold in the tropics! I love you even more than ever today. Heard nothing of the big cricket match as yet.

Saturday 25th April 1942

I have had one year in the rubber of Malaya but it has been a happy one thanks to you because you were ever by my side. Today has been glorious and I have been happy in my own way. I had the awful experience of seeing a priest's face slapped today and I could not do anything about it and neither could he. God bless you my darling.

Sunday 26th April 1942 (10 weeks)

This was the day of the big cricket match and I was not chosen to play in spite of an outcry about it from my fellows. I did not really mind a lot. So I spent the afternoon watching it all. I have had my usual happy day with you. My thoughts turned to Dublin and I thought of happy days there in the past — I do love that fair city as well as you, my darling! I loved those quiet streets around the Mansion House, the quaint houses of Merrion Square. It has a romantic appeal for me though I have never had any romances there. God bless you, my darling.

Monday 27th April 1942

I had an "Anti-Malarial" walk down by the sea this morning with two other officers. Then came a hockey match at 5.30 p.m. this evening when we only fielded 10 men and were beaten 6-0! So naturally I am tired because one cannot play games on rice and live in this climate. May He always bless you.

Tuesday 28th April 1942

It has been a quiet day and I have been happy. I washed a shirt yesterday evening and today it is perfect — no ironing but I have a trick of smoothing shirts out when they are damp! I was out with my lads this morning and our anti-malarial drain is completed with great success. God bless you.

Wednesday 29th April 1942

Today was a holiday — the Emperor of Japan's Birthday. I was a bit lost with no work (or little) to do. After breakfast I made a sanitary round of the camp. It rained in the afternoon and so I went asleep! I read my medical

[2] Bert Oldfield (1894-1976) wicketkeeper, Ben Barnett (1908-1979) wicketkeeper and Arthur Chipperfield (1905-1987) batsman were all Australian test cricketers.

book, said some prayers. Now a glorious sunset is sending me off to Rosary. Be it here recorded that my room-mate clattered out through this room *four* times last night!

Thursday 30th April 1942
Another month nearer to you my darling. I am writing this by a queer looking light — a bottle, some oil, and a wick made of lint! Another quiet day with no excitement. My little clock has ceased to function but a very nice Bombardier has promised to mend it for me. It is a precious part of our bottom drawer and I mean to show it off to you when I reach home again. God bless you. I do love you so very much.

Friday 1st May 1942
I have been sitting here in the cool of the evening for ages thinking of you and wondering if you were worried about me. This is May Day. Today has been perfect and I have never felt so well in my life thank God. He has spared me all the suffering and disease that have been the lot of many here. May He bless you.

Saturday 2nd May 1942
I am still in grand form thank God and I prayed hard to Him today when I was out with my men down by the sea. It was another perfect day, blue sky, hot sun, waving palms, and the sea in the background. God bless you, my own darling.

Sunday 3rd May 1942 (11 weeks)
You had your usual Mass and Communion this morning and a Rosary last night. I know and feel that your love is always with me — I could not live without it.

Monday 4th May 1942
My darling, another day nearer to you. I have not been outside the wire today. Had quite a busy morning. Went to see Fr. Kennedy and Capt. Seed RAMC — the latter is a nice lad who shares the padre's room. They treated me royally — cocoa, potato bread and fresh pineapple! We examine some blood slides for Malaria. Capt. Seed has promised to lend me some of his numerous medical books. I love you my own darling.

Tuesday 5th May 1942
Why, oh why can I think of nobody but you all the day? You bring me such happiness and consolation. What does anything matter — this awful separation, the uncertainty, the worry, the heartache — they will all end soon; what really matters is our love and our God.

Wednesday 6th May 1942
My own darling, I am a very tired man this evening. We, the other officers and I went down to the shore foraging. We dragged our trailer up hill and down dale — you would have been amazed to see your Frank out in front pulling the rope like a coolie! It was grand fun. We gathered fruit and furniture — basket chair and table. It was a glorious sight to stand on that cliff top and look down upon an ideal little cove; away beyond was the Pacific. God bless you my darling.

Thursday 7th May 1942
I was out with my men and Fr. Kennedy today and he got more wood for his Church. Poor man is beginning to feel the strain of his labours — he works too hard. You should see the marble slabs he has laid down in the sanctuary and the beautiful coloured glass windows for the back of the altar. I am going out with him tomorrow again. Do you know that my wonderful friend finds time to give instructions to converts?

Friday 8th May 1942 (Charles' Birthday R.I.P.)
Fr. Kennedy paid me a visit today and admired my crucifix very much. We have planned another trip tomorrow to the sea-shore. It is growing late and dark. God bless you.

Saturday 9th May 1942
I had a grand morning with Fr. Kennedy foraging by the sea. I sat in the garden of a lovely bungalow overlooking the sea and drank in the beauty of the sea and the shore below. I "scrounged" a nice little table — as did Fr. Kennedy. He is to use the latter as a table for his vestments in the new church. My clock returned today and now reposes on my table. I heard today that my friend Capt. George ("Georgie") is a patient in hospital. I shall pay him a visit tomorrow (D.V.). I have been invited out to dinner tomorrow night with the O.C. of our neighbouring Mountain Regiment — lots of jealousy about it. God bless you.

Sunday 10th May 1942 (12 weeks)
Three whole months I have been here! I am just returned from dinner — a four course dinner with a very nice crowd of lads. I was at Mass and Communion this morning for our intentions. I have not felt so well today and dread tomorrow.

Monday 11th May 1942
I have had a rotten night and think I am due for dysentery at last. Have been in bed all day long and this evening I am very weak. I did my sick parade alright but could not manage any more. I may have to go into hospital tomorrow as a patient. My darling I know that no matter what happens to me I shall love you forever.

Changi Hospital

Tuesday 12th May 1942
My first day in hospital is now over and I must scribble this line to tell you how much I love you.

Wednesday 13th May 1942
Have had a rough time today on starvation diet.

Thursday 14th May 1942
Another day and I feel better in spite of salts and starvation! I have nothing to do but dream of you the whole day through. God bless you.

Friday 15th May 1942
A bit better today thank God. Very weak. Have started on light diet. My darling I love you. Your lock of hair and your snap are close to my heart always. God bless you.

Saturday 16th May 1942
So very much better today thank God. My darling, being ill as a POW is really quite nice under the circumstances. I love you.

Sunday 17th May 1942
Another good day, thank God. Capt. Seed RAMC came today and gave me 2 bars of chocolate! What luxury! I love you my darling.

Monday 18th May 1942
Day by day I improve, thank God.

Tuesday 19th May 1942
Capt. J. W. George ("Georgie") came to see me this morning and spent 2 hours with me. He is a grand chap. McLaughlin came in the evening for a chat. Am being discharged tomorrow.

Wednesday 20th May 1942
Back to the fold again thank God! Discharged in the afternoon and had to walk two awful miles in the heat, but I managed and soon I shall be in bed again — my very own camp bed. God bless you my own darling.

Tuesday 12th May 1942 — Thursday 21st May 1942 Hospital
Came out of hospital yesterday and now I am back at work. Still feel very weak and have been given 14 days rest. However, I am doing work to pass the time away. If I only had your letters now how happy they would make me, but you do realise that it was much better to burn them. I have no means of locking things away as in the old days. May God bless you.

Friday 22nd May 1942
I am getting stronger daily thank God. There was a big inspection today by the D.D.M.S. and everything went off well. I have not ventured across to Chapel yet for the evening Rosary, but I shall be fit for Mass on Sunday (D.V.). I love you.

Saturday 23rd May 1942
It seems I am destined to see even more of the world. My unit has been warned to prepare to go overseas from Singapore in the near future and that means that I shall probably go with them. I don't know whether to be pleased or not because I am happy in this place and going out into the unknown is not pleasant in these times.

Sunday 24th May 1942 (14 weeks. Whit Sunday)
Was at Mass and Communion for you this morning. It is *our* day and I love it. God bless you.

Monday 25th May 1942
Had a busy day yesterday examining all the troops and it tired me out, so today I had a rest. Went to Rosary tonight and met Fr. Kennedy and Capt. Seed. The little wooden church is beautiful now that it is nearly finished. The altar looks grand with the stained glass window behind it. Dreamed of Dr Macsherry last night. God bless you.

Tuesday 26th May 1942
I had to make my big choice today — whether to remain on Singapore island or proceed overseas. I decided to remain. Another M.O. was much keener to go than I so I stepped down. Do you know that I still love you? I can see you every day of my life. You are so busy now preparing your pupils for the exams. I hope and pray that they will be as successful if not more so than last year. God bless you.

Wednesday 27th May 1942
I forgot to tell you that as I sat in the gloaming of Monday evening I heard a rich voice singing from the Australian lines across the road "Little Town in the Auld County Down"! Oh what memories it brought back to me. Great

preparations being made in camp for going overseas. Everyone is disappointed that I am not going with them. I love you.

Thursday 28th May 1942
The unit is due to leave on Saturday. I am to stay on in the same place and become Medical Officer to the I.A.O.C. which is moving in here. I already know several of the officers quite well — four of them were in Kuantan with me. Remember I had a major living next door to me there — he is one of this crowd. I am moving into a new room which is well furnished — table + chest of drawers.

Friday 29th May 1942
The big move has been cancelled until 15th June and now I am wondering if it will ever take place. I did a sanitary round this morning and blitzed everybody. The afternoon I spent making reports and returns. I peeped into our little church today and oh it was lovely — blue altar with lovely designs on the front etc. God bless you, my darling.

Saturday 30th May 1942
It has been a quiet day with no excitement. I have developed the most awful backache — I must be growing very old! It is much worse by night unfortunately. The weather has been much wetter recently. May God bless you.

Sunday 31st May 1942 (15 weeks)
This was Trinity Sunday — went to Mass and Communion for you my darling. A sudden hurricane blew up in the afternoon and nearly washed me out of my room. I am still sharing this with the dentist (Burgess). God bless you my own darling.

Monday 1st June 1942
What a glorious June day this has been, a warm Sun, a cool breeze and a blue sky. I should have gone out with my anti-malarial squad but I had a bad night with Rheumatism. This is a strange diary and you will never read it, Eileen. We are still eating plenty of rice; we get no milk at all now, so you may imagine what the rice tastes like! We have a few ounces of meat twice weekly also some vegetables during the week. I never drink the awful sugarless, milkless tea — I prefer water. I have lost a lot of weight and heaven alone knows when I shall get it back again! God bless you.

Tuesday 2nd June 1942
Still having awful nights with my back — I am still looking for sympathy you see! A glorious sunset tonight.

Wednesday 3rd June 1942
Back still bad! Father Kennedy came to see me this evening and collected my precious crucifix for his chapel. Tomorrow is Corpus Christi and the official opening of the new chapel. My crucifix now stands on top of the tabernacle and it completes the very lovely altar. Alas I cannot go to Mass tomorrow.

Thursday 4th June 1942
My darling, our latest move is into Singapore town area — I don't know when it will take place, but it seems certain that I shall leave lovely Changi and the sea. I have grown used to moving around the globe by this time, but I still don't like changes. The war changed everything for me but thank God it helped to bring us together.

Friday 5th June 1942
Another day nearer to you my darling. I intend visiting a specialist tomorrow to have my backache investigated. I knew so well what was going to happen in Malaya and that's why I warned you before the battle here. God bless you.

Saturday 6th June 1942
My own darling, I can't help loving you as much as I do. You are as real and true to me now as if you were with me in this little room. I went to see the specialist in the hospital and he discovered Rheumatic nodules in my spine which were pressing on nerves producing that awful pain. I have to go back again tomorrow to have a Novocaine injection into my spine. God bless you, Eileen alannah.

Sunday 7th June 1942
Went to Mass and Communion this morning. After breakfast I set out for the hospital, had my injection, and now I am almost well again. Oh what relief! What a night I had last night but please God those weary hours are ended — I did not forget to offer up my pain. God bless you.

Monday 8th June 1942
My darling, I have had a grand night's sleep. I went to Mass and Communion at 8.40am — Father Kennedy now says daily Mass in the little Chapel. I have changed my sick parade time to 8am and as there are not too many sick I have just time to see them all and rush across to Mass. It is hard on the sick as Reveille is at 8am too. Now I thank God that I can now have daily Mass and Communion and Rosary in our own Chapel. My darling, I love you and I am happy this night.

Tuesday 9th June 1942
Mass and Communion today again — oh how heavenly it is nowadays for me. I never think of food or hunger — I am too happy. My back still pains but nothing compared to what it has been.

Wednesday 10th June 1942
You will take it for granted that my day includes Mass, Communion, a visit to the Blessed Sacrament and night Rosary at the Chapel and all the other things I mentioned yesterday. I love you.

Thursday 11th June 1942
Oh, my Eileen alannah if I could only give you some idea of how much I love you. May God bless you.

Friday 12th June 1942 (Feast of the Sacred Heart)
How fervently I prayed to His Sacred Heart today and asked him for so many favours for us both. My darling, I made a conquest today without any persuasion or talk — I brought Capt. Cooper to Rosary tonight and introduced him to Fr. Kennedy. He hasn't been to Mass for ages and now he has arranged for Confession tomorrow. I love you.

Saturday 13th June 1942
The new Chapel has been named and above the door is a lovely signboard, "Catholic Church of St. Ignatius Loyola, erected by the Prisoners of War, 11 Division, Singapore".

Sunday 14th June 1942 (17 weeks)
My darling I had a bad night with my back — I actually shouted out twice with pain! I must see the Medical Specialist tomorrow again and see if another injection is indicated. I went for a long walk tonight — 5 times around the Padang (4 miles) — maybe that will help. I love you. May God bless you my darling.

Monday 15th June 1942
Saw Medical Specialist today and he advises X-Ray of my spine — in 10 days times. I was rather disappointed, but I have to be patient. Pain can teach me a lot — it is really a good thing for us or God would not send it to us. My darling, I do love you so much today.

Tuesday 16th June 1942
The Japanese *paid* us a few days ago — $2 eventually reached me — $5.50 went to a pool and the officers' mess. Imagine darling $2 per month! A canteen is supposed to open today but what it will contain I do not know. The food is scarce now and it is over a week since we had meat. Still, we have plenty of rice — without salt, sugar or milk! Why do I tell you of such sordid things such as food! God bless you.

Wednesday 17th June 1942
I made a beast of myself this afternoon when I consumed a tin of condensed milk purchased from the canteen! Last night we had a party in my room — sausage (tinned) sandwiches, *real* bread and real margarine! I *did* share my tin of milk with others and actually had milk in our tea! My darling, I love you so very much.

Thursday 18th June 1942
Most of the unit is moving out on Saturday. Going up country. I am remaining behind and becoming M.O. to the new unit — Ordnance people. I know several of the officers. We had another feast last night in my room — bully sandwiches, cocoa with condensed milk in it, and pineapple and milk! What luxury! God bless you.

Friday 19th June 1942
My darling, I sent you a postcard today! The Japanese allowed us to send one card each and so mine was for you. I wonder if you will ever receive it and when. Yes, we are really being treated well here as prisoners of war. These must be worrying days for you with the exams in full swing.

Saturday 20th June 1942
A quiet day. My back is very painful now. God bless you and keep you my own darling.

Sunday 21st June 1942 (18 weeks)
My darling, the 80 Anti-Tank Unit has moved out and I am waiting for the new crowd to move in (Ordnance Corps). I have a room all to myself nowadays! My next door neighbour will be Major Hill (+ Capt. Pearson) — the former was next door to me for many months at Kuantan! I knew the latter quite well too.

Monday 22nd June 1942
My darling, Father Kennedy has just left me — been talking to me for past half hour. He is a good man. My back has been awful today and I begin to suspect there is something radically wrong with my spine. God bless you.

Tuesday 23rd June 1942
My darling, I love you so very much. Quiet day; back bad.

Wednesday 24th June 1942
Another quiet day. Examined by another doctor who diagnosed Neuritis. God bless you.

Thursday 25th June 1942
Going into hospital today — am an awful crock! God bless you.

Thursday 25th June — Tuesday 21st July 1942
In hospital with Arthritic Spine.

Wednesday 22nd July 1942
My own darling, I am so much better now — no pains or aches. I am happier than I have been before. Had an awful time in hospital but thank God that is all over now. God bless you Eileen. Sorry I could not write before.

Thursday 23rd July 1942
I slept like a top last night thank God. I have had a glorious day in the sun in an easy chair. I intend having two weeks rest before resuming work. 3,000 senior officers and men are being sent to Japan at the weekend, so I am missing that trip. God bless you.

Friday 24th July 1942
I have moved my quarters and am only a few yards away from the Chapel. I am still taking things easy and reading lots. God bless you.

Saturday 25th July 1942 (confession)
Another quiet day, reading sunbathing and praying. We had eggs for breakfast this morning! I hope you are having a grand holiday at Killough and that you are very happy.

Sunday 26th July 1942 (Feast of St. Ann)
It has been *our* day today. I am having grand walks nowadays around the Padang. I am contented to live even as a P.O.W. but please my darling hurry up and send me home to you. God bless you.

Monday 27th July 1942
I am still having my holiday and loving it. Have you received my postcard yet? I am reading Readers Digest (Jan. 1940!). God bless you my own darling.

Tuesday 28th July 1942
Another grand day and I am feeling so very fit. We had a General and a Brigadier to dinner tonight. I got on famously with these as they had both been to India. We exchanged experiences a lot. God bless and keep you.

Wednesday 29th July 1942
I was reading a magazine today and came across the words "University library". Oh what memories of Queens those words brought back to me — they were all memories of the peaceful atmosphere of *our* library and they were all memories of you. I have had a quiet and happy day. God bless you.

Thursday 30th July 1942
Eileen, my darling, I am fit again! I am as brown as a berry and am putting on weight. I do thank God for it all. I was homesick today and wanted so much to see you. However, it won't be long now. God bless you.

Friday 31st July 1942
Another year nearer to you, my darling. Some day this will all end and we shall be together again. I am making the best of things here in this war camp. The very thought that when this is all over I shall meet you face to face — well anything is bearable and life is sweet.

Saturday 1st August 1942
My own darling, it is late in the evening and the sun is setting away out on that perfect horizon. I am pleasantly tired as I had a long walk to H.Q. Command area. I visited the Bureau of Missing Persons and got no tidings of Humphrey Thomson. God bless you and keep you.

Sunday 2nd August 1942
My last days of freedom because tomorrow I start work again. That means no more daily Mass — that is the awful part of it. Never in my life have I lived so near to a chapel — just a few yards and yet I cannot have daily Mass.

Monday 3rd August 1942
Back to work again and I love it! It has been a quiet day and I am not a bit the worse for wear. The party has not gone to Japan as yet and that has caused speculation. God bless you, Eileen aroon.

Tuesday 4th August 1942
Work is still pleasant. Time passes very quickly nowadays and soon I shall be home again to you. God bless and keep you now and always.

Wednesday 5th August 1942
I heard unofficially that my postcard had reached you safely. Thank God you know that I am safe and still love you. Did you receive the wee note I sent you per Mrs O'Callaghan who was going home to Ireland? I wanted you to have that. May God bless you.

Thursday 6th August 1942
A busy day. Thank God I am fit for it all. I do miss my daily Mass so very much and nothing can make up for that loss. God bless you.

Friday 7th August 1942
I have had another busy day thank God. May He bless you and keep you safe.

Saturday 8th August 1942
It has been so very hot today and I have had lots of work to do but I had time to think of you and pray for you. May God bless you.

Sunday 9th August 1942 (25 weeks)
Had a busy morning with my sick. Thank God for Mass and Communion — it makes such a difference. Fr Kennedy excelled himself in his sermon. I find myself becoming far too critical of others in this P.O.W. camp. It is awful to see so many men shut in here getting on each other's nerves!

Monday 10th August 1942
Another busy day thank God; time passes so quickly nowadays. Food situation improves. A soldier came to me today and asked me if I were Dr Murray — he had a message from Fr Bourke for me (verbally). He sent me his regards and described me as a great Irishman! What a compliment coming from a Redemptorist. God bless you.

Tuesday 11th August 1942
My darling, another day nearer to you and home. The same glorious sunset is away out in the West. A very hot busy day. God bless you.

Wednesday 12th August 1942
My darling, time is passing so quickly nowadays that I know not where my day goes to. If I could only tell you how safe I am here without being cowardly — it would be worse in Egypt or India at the moment. God bless you.

Thursday 13th August 1942
I have not mentioned that I am living in a barrack room with 8 other officers. It has its advantages and its disadvantages! Not much privacy but plenty of room and "back chat". However, it is brighter. Our quarters overlook the large padang and it is a healthy spot. I love you with all my heart.

Friday 14th August 1942
Another hectic day but still I have time to think of you and love you as never before. Do not forget to wear your divorce costume when we meet again at Southampton. Oh what a wonderful day in our lives that will be. May God bless you.

Saturday 15th August 1942 (Feast of the Assumption)
You have a special Rosary all to yourself, this afternoon in the little Chapel. God bless you.

Sunday 16th August 1942 (26 weeks!)
6 months a P.O.W. and I am still alive thank God. Some food has arrived from South Africa for us here — marge, flour and cigarettes etc. I wonder if it will help our diet. God bless you.

Monday 17th August 1942
Had a walk to hospital this afternoon to see some patients. Met some of my old friends from the Field Ambulance and we talked of old times. May God bless you.

Tuesday 18th August 1942
Oh horror of horrors — we have been ordered to remove our beards by the powers that be (British). And yet I cannot shave mine because I have not got the wherewithal! God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 9th August 1942
Nothing to report today. I forgot to mention that all our generals, brigadiers, colonels and 400 men were shipped to Japan on Sunday last. Last night we had a guest night and quite a feast. May God bless you.

Thursday 20th August 1942
Has been raining the whole evening. It's not much fun remaining indoors looking out at the rain. We had our sweets today from South Africa, also a pound of jam each! My darling I love you.

Friday 21st August 1942
I played in a cricket match today and scored 8 runs! I could scarcely run at all, nor could I throw a ball! I discovered how really weak I am nowadays. Oh could I feel as I have felt! My own darling, do not worry about me — I know I shall be home again to you. God bless you.

Saturday 22nd August 1942
I lost my beard today — had to shave it off! People hardly recognise me since I appeared. Had a very busy day and oh how tired and stiff I am after my cricket yesterday. I still say good morning and God bless you and good night.

Sunday 23rd August 1942 (27 weeks)
My darling — another day nearer to you and our happiness — and another week too. I was busy working till 5 p.m. this evening — I am the only man who has to work on Sunday. God bless you.

Monday 24th August 1942
We had a special treat last night of peanut toffee! Seven officers and 150 men came back from Singapore today; so there will be lots more work to do. There are 17 of us now in this barrack room and it's quite a crush. May God bless and keep you safe.

Tuesday 25th August 1942
Another busy day — working till 6 p.m. We had a marvellous 5-course dinner tonight — if you could only have been there you would realise that we are not exactly starving as P.O.W.s. May God bless you.

Wednesday 26th August 1942
I paid a special visit for you to our chapel and I asked Him to bless you.

Thursday 27th August 1942
My darling, I am having a hectic time working the whole day long. How quickly the time is passing but oh how I long for you — how I long for your first Red Cross letter to me. May God bless you.

Friday 28th August 1942
Another wonderful dream about you last night. May God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 29th August 1942
My darling, another day as a P.O.W. has gone and I am nearer to you than ever before. It has been very hot and I have been very busy. I visited the hospital yesterday afternoon and saw my friend Paddy Hensicker dying — he was the finest horseman in India. I also saw Col. Benson ("Benny") — he has got gastritis. God bless you now and always.

Sunday 30th August 1942 (27 weeks)
Another day all to ourselves. We had a marvellous sermon tonight by Fr. Kennedy on "The Love of God" and I know so many more things about loving Him and how to love Him. May God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 31st August 1942
The regiment paraded this morning on the Padang and the C.O. addressed them. Then *I* addressed the multitude about vitamins and food, about beri beri and dysentery. My lecture upset my whole morning and left me late for everything. We formally refused to sign a document swearing not to attempt to escape — the Japanese asked us to sign.

Tuesday 1st September 1942
We paraded in the Padang this morning and we were counted by the Japanese officers. I was mixed up with the combatants! I fear that my Red Cross does not mean much — I am treated as other soldiers. Have been working all afternoon. I love you my own darling. God bless you.

Wednesday 2nd September 1942 (Anne's Birthday)
This morning at 5 a.m. we were awakened by the C.O. and informed that the Japanese intended putting us in a very confined area[3] — 17,000 men! At 2 p.m. we packed up and off we went to our confinement! My darling, it was an awful sight. So many people crushed into so small an area. The sanitation will be an awful problem and *I* have been made officer i/c sanitation for our division!

Thursday 3rd September 1942
Oh what a night! We have refused again to sign the Japanese document declaring that we would not attempt to escape. We have been literally sleeping on top of each other! I shall never forget what I have seen today — it is indescribable. It's like the Black Hole of Calcutta + American Civil War. No sick are being allowed out to hospital! My darling, I love you.

Friday 4th September 1942
Another day of frightfulness — of odour, of dirt, of heat and crushing. I met *my* three officers — "Georgie", Johnson Hill and another chap. Four men were shot on Wednesday last by the Japanese as a reprisal for our refusal to sign their document. We have at least decided to sign tomorrow on medical grounds only because of diphtheria and dysentery epidemics. I think we should have waited for at least a week.

Saturday 5th September 1942
We signed the document and were released this afternoon and now we are back again in paradise and left our hell. My darling, I am glad in a way that it is over now; you were ever in my thoughts.

Sunday 6th September 1942 (28 weeks)
It has been a glorious day, the "peace" day. I prayed so hard for you at Mass and Communion this morning. Fr. Kennedy preached a lovely sermon this evening; followed by the Rosary and prayer for peace. God bless you. I am off to a gramophone recital of "HMS Pinafore".

Monday 7th September 1942
A very busy day, and a very hot one too. When I think of the happiness we shall have together when we are united again — well it's all too wonderful and makes my prisoner life really pleasant. God bless you.

Tuesday 8th September 1942
The usual day in the life of a P.O.W. and the usual outpouring of my love to you. My own darling, you will *never* know how much I love you — not until we meet again. And then it does not bear thinking about. May God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 9th September 1942
I had a glorious afternoon outside the wire with a wood gathering party. I feel so very much better for it. I intend going down to the woods much oftener in future. God bless you.

[3] This is the start of the infamous Selarang Barracks incident.

Thursday 10th September 1942
How the time is flying and oh how I hope and pray that it is flying towards the end of this awful war. I am hoping to hear from you in the very near future. You have been very irregular with your letters recently! May God and His Holy Mother bless and protect you.

Friday 11th September 1942
My darling, I love you still as much as ever. It is ages since I have seen or heard from you! You poor darling back at work again in Omagh. However, I too am working hard and praying too. Confession.

Saturday 12th September 1942
Another hectic day of work and heat. Have been thinking of you the whole day through. Cannot think of anything but you. May God bless you and keep you safe.

Sunday 13th September 1942 (30 weeks)
We had a special treat this evening — Benediction. I think it will be a permanent affair on Sundays. Later I went to a gramophone recital and it was the end of a perfect day. I sat in the darkness and listened to a marvellous pianoforte concerto and thought of you and loved you more than ever.

Monday 14th September 1942
A very hectic day but oh how thankful I am to God that I have work to do. There are so many neurotics around the place. There are rumours that we are to receive full pay very soon. My back is almost well again. I can even distinguish myself at deck tennis! God bless you my darling.

Tuesday 15th September 1942
My darling, I do love you so very much tonight. It has been raining today and so it is much cooler. The work is not so bad now, so I must start reading again; I did manage a bit of study this afternoon and please God there will be lots more soon. God bless you.

Wednesday 16th September 1942
I have spent my day making out medical returns for the Imperial Japanese Army! My Ipoh friend Wimsey is now in hospital with dysentery and I shall go to see him tomorrow.

Thursday 17th September 1942
My darling, I do love you in the midst of this awful hurricane! I have been working all day and could not visit the hospital as I wanted to. May God bless you and keep you from all harm.

Friday 18th September 1942
A hectic day with heaps of work. Many prisoners arrived from Sumatra — including Dutch. My darling, I do love you. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 19th September 1942
Another busy day — finished at 6 p.m. I have not been so happy or so healthy for ages as I am tonight. There is a marvellous sunset in the Western Skies. Tomorrow is *our* day and I love you so.

Sunday 20th September 1942
My darling, didn't you hear me praying for you this morning? I have been working the whole day long — never a moment to spare. Father Kennedy came in today and he is to lend me a book by R.H. Benson. He is a grand chap. May God bless you my darling.

Monday 21st September 1942
My darling, I love you even more today. This has been the hottest day so far and it has been a busy one too. Nothing exciting today. Lots of bugs around last night. A marvellous gramophone concert last night in the moonlight — Wagner, Il Trovatore, Faust, Yehudi Menhuin. God bless you.

Tuesday 22nd September 1942
A hot sticky day with lots of work. Do you still love me Eileen alannah or have you fallen in love with some American lad in the army. God bless you.

Wednesday 23rd September 1942
I was invited out to tea today by Lt. Ponsford my former pal of the Field Ambulance and 'Pindi days. Very hot today. Heaps of peanuts eaten! May God bless you.

Thursday 24th September 1942
The days are passing quickly and I love you with all my heart. Please remind me to buy "God and Reason" and "On What Authority". God bless you.

Friday 25th September 1942
My own darling, I had a marvellous dream about you last night. May God bless you.

Saturday 26th September 1942
My darling, another wet, sticky, depressing day. But it cannot ever be too dull for me. You are all that I can live for. Tomorrow is *our* day again. God bless you.

Sunday 27th September 1942
My darling, it has been a happy day because it was spent with you and with Him. We have heard that a ship has arrived with Red Cross stores — maybe there is a letter from you. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 28th September 1942
A hot day with heaps of work. The Japanese medical people are coming down to examine our sick and wounded for repatriation. I love you more than ever and I know that it will never change.

Tuesday 29th September 1942
Have not felt well recently but am better today. Still working and still loving you. Had a nice evening after Rosary with Major Hill IAOC (my Kuantan friend). I had a grand evening on Sunday — gramophone concert (Beethoven's Pianoforte Concerto No.4).

Wednesday 30th September 1942
Have arranged to visit hospital tomorrow. I am going with Ponsford to see Col. Benson. Have had a hectic day dealing with a food poisoning epidemic. May God bless you.

Thursday 1st October 1942
Went to hospital by Ambulance Car. Saw Col. Benson and he is much better. It is almost dark now. God bless you.

Friday 2nd October 1942
My own darling, I have neglected you, but I know you will understand. When I came back from hospital yesterday I had a long weary job — the Japanese medicals came to examine my wounded cases for repatriation. I learned that my friend Wimsey had called to see me while I was at hospital. I was very sorry to have missed him.

Saturday 3rd October 1942
A hot and sticky day and I love you with all my heart and soul. We had Benediction last night. Evening devotion always reminds me of Clonard and you. Do you remember the days when I used to wait for you on Springfield Road!

Sunday 4th October 1942
My darling, it has been a happy day. We had a grand sermon from Fr. Kennedy this evening. And now I am off across the Padang to hear "Pirates of Penzance" in a gramophone recital. God bless you.

Monday 5th October 5th 1942
The music last night was grand — it always brings me back home to you and my dear ones.

Tuesday 6th October 1942
I have been to the hospital today by ambulance car and met many old acquaintances. My darling, I love you tonight more than ever. The others are off to an Australian concert. May God bless you.

Wednesday 7th October 1942
Father Kennedy has pitched a tent on the Padang and intends using it as his home. Our hymn last night was "I'll Sing a Hymn to Mary" — one of my favourites. I *still* love you, Eileen aroon.

Thursday 8th October 1942
Heaps of Red Cross food arrived today — and how welcome it is. I have started my Gaelige again! God bless you.

Friday 9th October 1942
Nothing exciting today my darling. I was in a happy mood. Spent hours converting a pair of khaki shorts turn-ups into a pair of ordinary shorts! You should see my very fine needlework. My kit is very complete; my shoes are as good as new; all my socks and stockings are intact. I love you Eileen and am waiting so patiently for a letter from you. All the Red Cross things arriving make me homesick. May God bless you.

Saturday 10th October 1942
A busy day but that was endurable. We had a feast at dinner tonight — a Red Cross dinner! However I managed it all! My sore feet are better because I am eating my rice polishings! May God bless you, darling.

Sunday 11th October 1942
I had a very pleasant afternoon with Mr Wimsey. I managed an afternoon tea and biscuits! Poor chap looks ill and has lost lots of weight. He is a sergeant in the Volunteers. My darling I love you more today.

Monday 12th October 1942
A routine busy day with my sore feet to help me along. I took out Felix's wedding group today and oh how lovely you looked in it. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 13th October 1942
We had an officers' parade today — a check roll called by the Japanese. The heat was intense. My darling, you know how much I love you. God bless you.

Wednesday 14th October 1942
We were paid today ($20) — cheers. I bought some soap and sweets. God bless you.

Thursday 15th October 1942
We had lots of sweets and biscuits from Red Cross today. Rumours of some mail today — wouldn't it be grand if I could have a letter from you. Oh Eileen alannah you will not have to wait long.

Friday 16th October 1942
I am sitting on the steps of the mess and looking out at a marvellous sunset and my thoughts are with you as ever.

Saturday 17th October 1942
My darling, I still love you. This regiment has been detailed to proceed to Bangkok to build a railway and I may be going along with them. May God bless you.

Sunday 18th October 1942
Our day has been the usual one of glorious happiness. I was expecting a visit from Mr Wimsey and had arranged to have tea with Fr. Kennedy in his lovely tent. I visited the latter just before lunch today and had quite a chat with him. May God bless you. I am giving Gaelic lessons!!

Monday 19th October 1942
Poor Fr. Kennedy was flooded out today and had to bale out his tent with buckets. When it rains here it pours. The rainy season is now approaching and it should be cooler. We had a grand lecture tonight from the Aussie test match cricketer Barnett. We have cocoa (Red Cross) and milk at nights now and I am heaps stronger thank God. I offer up my sore feet daily — they are improving. God bless you.

Tuesday 20th October 1942
My own darling, I awoke so very happy this morning because I was dreaming of you. God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 21st October 1942
I shall not have to leave Changi after all if the unit leaves. This has made me so very happy. We had a grand talk last night by an American naval officer from the "Houston" cruiser. My darling, you have never been so near to me.

Thursday 22nd October 1942
I am having special Marmite treatment[4] for my sore feet! Had eggs and toffee today at Canteen. We had a grand sing-song in our mess last night. I sang "The Wearing of the Green", "Danny Boy" and "Come Back to Erin"! God bless you.

[4] The story goes that Frank got someone to barter one of his fountain pens for a jar of Marmite, knowing that it was rich in vitamins. It probably saved his eyesight.

Friday 23rd October 1942
Thousands of Javanese troops arrived today in their *green* uniforms. They are mostly Dutch and very charming. I attended to their sick last night. I had a hard seat and bed on the floor. I gave my bed up to the weary men.

Saturday 24th October 1942
I was detailed to go overseas to Japan tomorrow but it was suddenly cancelled for some reason or another. The whole of 80 A/T are leaving tomorrow. I love you my own darling. Fr. Kennedy alas is going away too.

Sunday 25th October 1942
My darling, they have all gone off to Japan and I am still in Singapore. I have about 200 sick men to attend to daily – not to mention Javanese Dutch who come and go in their hundreds. No Mass today. Very busy. Wimsey came in the afternoon and I gave him a new pair of boots and a lovely cushion. May God bless you.

Monday 26th October 1942
What a lovely day this has been for me. Hundreds of sick and I moved with the dentist to new quarters – we are sharing a room. The new mess is small – eight of us – but very comfortable. Heaps of food nowadays. God bless you.

Tuesday 27th October 27th 1942
Oh dear! I have now 1500 Dutch from Java to look after as well as my own sick. I have made 3 good friends in 3 Dutch doctors –– one navy and two army. They help me quite a lot. I work all day. May God bless you.

Wednesday 28th October 1942
Very busy morning. Went to hospital in afternoon and saw Frank McLaughlin. He was in grand spirits because he had a letter from his wife (née Corr of Glen Rd.). She posted it in June 1942. I love you still.

Thursday 29th October 1942
My darling, do you realise that I am with you all day and every day. You will not have long to wait until our happiness becomes supreme. God bless you.

Friday 30th October 1942
Oh my Eileen I do not deserve your love. The Dutch are keeping us busy. God bless you.

Saturday 31st October 1942
We had a lovely Stations of the Cross last night but we have no priest yet. You would have loved the Dutch choir which sang "Stabat Mater". No Mass in this area tomorrow but there is one at 10.30 tomorrow in Australian camp – just when my work is due to begin; on Monday I cannot have Mass. Oh how I will always appreciate Mass in the future. I have made good friends among the Dutchmen. God bless you, my darling.

Sunday 1st November 1942
Had an awful night with no sleep till 5am but had my first sleep in till 9am! Last night Ponsford and a Dutch friend came and had cocoa with me – then we went to a sing-song in the Sergeants' Mess. Today has been busy but I had time to entertain Wimsey and my Dutch pal to tea and banana fritters! The latter produced hundreds of marvellous snaps of Java and Sumatra. Everyone was charmed with my new pal! I gave Wimsey toothbrush and blades and said goodbye to him as he may be sent to Siam this week. God bless you.

Monday 2nd November 1942 — All Souls

My darling, I have a strange feeling of optimism recently but I am restless too. There are not many troops left in Singapore now and my turn may be next to move. We had final Gramophone Concert last night "Traviata" and it was soothing to hear good music followed by cocoa with my Dutch pal outside our Mess. You are ever in my thoughts and prayers my dearest Eileen.

Tuesday 3rd November 1942

I have been to see the eye specialist this afternoon and I have got Keratitis due to vitamin deficiency. I cannot read or see well but please God it will mend soon with care. May God bless you my own darling.

Wednesday 4th November 1942

Said farewell to Frank McLaughlin yesterday – going to Siam. I saw an Australian eye specialist today (Major Orr) and he gave me great hopes about my eyes. Black out tonight. God bless you.

Thursday 5th November 1942

A restful day because of rain. My friend Kutzen came this afternoon and provided more snaps of Holland and Sumatra. You will soon be having your Christmas holidays again without me in spite of my promise last year to be with you. I have been thinking of candlesticks today! God bless you.

Friday 6th November 1942

My darling, what must you think of me now – no letter for about a year! And yet I have loved you more and more each day of that year. You have never left my thoughts for a moment. It is so cruel of me and selfish to ask you to wait all this time for me, but I cannot avoid this. Nothing exciting today.

Saturday 7th November 1942

I am much stronger nowadays and have long solitary walks around the padang each evening – also I putt the shot a lot. My eyes do not improve. A quiet day with you wondering what you were doing each moment. Great news of Mass tomorrow in our chapel at 10.30 am; I am in high glee – have arranged the sick parades to be much earlier so that I can get to Mass and Communion. God bless you my darling.

Sunday 8th November 1942

I dreamed last night that someone was singing "Eileen Alannah"! An Irish priest in the Australian army said Mass and has promised to come again tomorrow at 8 am. May He bless you.

Monday 9th November 1942

Mass and Holy Communion today again – more and more happiness, more and more love for you. There are only a few thousand troops left in Changi and I am still lucky to be here too – Thailand is not so good! God bless you.

Tuesday 10th November 1942

A quiet day; nothing much doing. I just love you as never before. Please hurry up and write to me. God bless you now and always.

Wednesday 11th November 1942

My darling, the dentist is leaving me soon. I may join up with my next-door neighbour – Capt. Gordon Brown. He is a Gunner officer who was badly wounded in the battle by a cannon from a tank. He has lost his right arm

and his left leg is smashed. I am teaching him to walk without limping. He didn't believe it was possible. He is one of the grandest lads I have ever met. You would love him Eileen.

Thursday 12th November 1942
My dearest one, another day of happiness supreme – Mass and Communion this morning. The Australian (Irish) priest has come 3 times this week and long may it continue. I began my diary today – it is a short account of my military career since December 2nd 1939; I shall soon be 3 years a soldier – 3 precious years of our lives apparently wasted. But God knows best.

Friday 13th November 1942
Did you know that I love you as never before? God bless you.

Saturday 14th November 1942
We have a new Artillery Mess now – 31 officers. It is much more cheery. One of the officers is a brother of Fr. Ronald Knox. We are eating well nowadays – even smoking cigars! It would be grand if I were left here till the end. God bless you.

Sunday 15th November 1942
Oh my darling, I do not deserve such happiness and I do not deserve you. I wrote a long extract in my military diary today – I am now crossing the Channel!

Monday 16th November 1942
A busy day with lots of walking around latrines. A POW doctor has an awful time while other officers have nothing to do. God bless you.

Tuesday 17th November 1942
Another hectic day and a visit to Graham Orr. My eyes are a little better – I have got retrobulbar neuritis cause due to deficient vitamins. I find myself growing stronger daily thank God. My darling I shall see you soon again. God bless you.

Wednesday 18th November 1942
I have had a dreamy day and I dreamed of you and made plans for our future together. Oh my Eileen, how I do love you my darling.

Thursday 19th November 1942
I have done heaps of darning and sewing today. My darling you should see my socks nowadays – they are just a mass of darns! We have a marvellous collection of officers now – solicitors, insurance brokers, chartered accountants, a dentist, a doctor (me!), an agricultural inspector, a teacher, 1 Cambridge graduate & 2 undergraduates, 1 brilliant Oxford classical scholar (complete with specs).

Friday 20th November 1942
After a hectic morning I went to see Col. Benson at hospital. He looks so much better though he has Amoebic Dysentery. I brought him a packet of cigars and he was so grateful for them. We had a long chat about our field ambulance days. When oh when will your first letter arrive? God bless you my darling.

Saturday 21st November 1942

I have been cruising down the Mediterranean this afternoon in my diary! I know you would have loved it, with so many nice days aboard. We have quite a farm here now in the mess. I am awakened each morning by the clucking of hens and the quacking of our ducks and ducklings. And now the Japanese are giving us 200 pigs to start a piggery nearby. I bought many cheroots for Benny today. God bless you.

Sunday 22nd November 1942

My darling, it is our day again and it has been perfect. I had Confession, Mass, & Communion at 10.30 am this morning. The priest did not have to tell us how thankful we should be to God for having so many good things in a POW camp. I do thank him daily for everything He has given me. I do love you, my darling.

Monday 23rd November 1942

I visited Benny today in hospital and brought him heaps of his beloved cigars. He was very thrilled about this. He is coming out of hospital tomorrow and has promised to have lunch with me next week at our mess. Fr. Ronald Knox's nephew is now living with us. I think he is a good chap. He is officer i/c fishing and he is very good to the natives in treating their sores.

Tuesday 24th November 1942

My darling, do you know that I love you above all else in this world? I even owe my life to you because I would have faded away in this P.O.W. camp were it not for you. A quiet day with no incidents. There is a hurricane raging outside now and I love it. I am in perfect health again thank God.

Wednesday 25th November 1942

A note from Benny today saying that he will come to lunch on Saturday. We had Lord de Ramsey (Major R.A.) to lunch today – he is the pig man of our area now! I mean he is running our pig farm! He was not treated in lordly fashion by us as he had rice and bully beef with the rest. God bless you.

Thursday 26th November 1942

My darling, I have grand walks each evening around the padang – those moments are specially for you. Ranafast all comes back to me – my idol singing; then comes my memories of every little thing about you – camogie, ceilidhs, 16-hand reels.

Friday 27th November 1942

I am reading John Gunter's "Inside Asia" – it is a terrific book and very, very interesting to me. I have learned a lot about Chinese, Indians, Japanese, Javanese, Malays etc. since coming east. Ponsford came to see me after dinner and we had a walk around the padang. A note from "Benny" today saying that he cannot come to lunch tomorrow – not quite fit for the walk yet. I love you Asthoir. God bless you.

Saturday 28th November 1942

I had a lovely walk to hospital this afternoon and saw "Benny". I had more cigars for him. He has left the ward and is now in a RAMC mess at hospital. He has promised to come to lunch on Saturday next. God bless you.

Sunday 29th November 1942

Another happy Sunday with you and my Lord. May God bless you Eileen.

Monday 30th November 1942

I sang our Ranafast songs, Eileen Alannah, Eileen Aroun, as I had my evening walk around the padang last night. I heard a soldier playing "Kevin Barry" on a piano this morning – another man in our cookhouse whistling it! What paradoxes I have met in this war. Today (St. Andrew's) has been uneventful. God bless you.

Tuesday 1st December 1942

I am reading "Inside Asia" still – we must have it in *our* library. Have you bought *our* dog yet Eileen? I am dying to get home again to you and everything and everyone I hold dear to me. I had a grand game of "Monopoly" with Burgess, Brown, Laing, French and Watkins last night. I won easily but I laughed so much during the game that tears streamed down my cheeks! Can you imagine a P.O.W. being happy like that?

Wednesday 2nd December 1942

3 years a soldier today! My darling, I am not really a soldier – I am the same Frank Murray who loved you the first time he saw you in far-off Donegal. I pray that I may never change for your sake. Oh my Eileen I cannot love you enough.

Thursday 3rd December 1942

I had another hectic game of Monopoly tonight and won again against Jones, Knight and Burgess. I was in terrific form. God bless you.

Friday 4th December 1942

My birthday (30th!). I treated myself to ½ doz. tangerine oranges; 4 bars of soap; a trip to hospital with Gordon Brown's kit; a visit to Benny; a trip to the seashore; and many, many happy dreams of you. I felt so near to you during the whole of this day of days. God bless you.

Saturday 5th December 1942

A happy busy day but raining heavily. I am now reading "Fame is the Spur" (Howard Spring). May God bless you.

Sunday 6th December 1942

Oh my darling, I have been so very happy today. It has rained all day and all last night. God bless you.

Monday 7th December 1942

Rain, rain for 72 hours without ceasing! I had some peanut toffee yesterday and Gula Malacca today. We are being spoiled as P.O.W.s here. We heard that a Red Cross ship is due in tomorrow. I pray that it carries a letter from you.

Tuesday 8th December 1942 (Feast of the Immaculate Conception)

1st Anniversary of Malayan War. It is still raining. Went to bed at midnight last night – a blackout night. We have started a small literary society – 8 of us. French, Knox, Jones, Long, Rawe, Wright, Welcock and myself. We sit around a table during the blackout sipping coffee. Last night we told a story among ourselves – each man makes his serial contribution. You would have roared with laughter. I took up the story when an armoured train was dashing all over our London Tube railways, with the villain on board! I had a lovely walk this morning at dawn by the sea.

Wednesday 9th December 1942
Another black-out last night and still raining! Our literific was in full swing – this time a serial poem. When the verse was not considered good we had to stand up on a chair and sing a named song at full blast – we all sang; I had to sing Kelly of Killan!! Am looking forward to tonight. God bless you.

Thursday 10th December 1942
Rained all night and all day! We had a big discussion last night on politics. I was "agin" everything. I flayed the English for their treatment of the Irish and Indians! French's grandfather was Lord Chief Justice of Ireland.

Friday 11th December 1942
Rain has stopped at last, but I spent most of the day in bed – rheumatic knee. All is well tonight thank God. Glendinning and Ponsford came to see me. I am finishing my book "Fame is the Spur". God bless you Eileen.

Saturday 12th December 1942
I had a long chat with Major Soper last night. His people have settled in the Gaeltacht of Scotland (highlands). He has written a book and has asked me to read it and correct the few lines of Gaelige in it. I was very flattered. He told me all about the Catholic highlands and the grand people there. It reminded me of our Donegal days and the grand folk of Ranafast. God bless you.

Sunday 13th December 1942
Letters have arrived at Japanese HQ but alas there are none for me! However, I am content and happy to wait. My darling, I love you more than you could imagine possible. I have been to Confession, Mass and Communion today. I have had my usual happy day with you but everyday is spent with you. I have started to read "The Green and the Gold" (Soper) today. May God bless you Eileen.

Monday 14th December 1942
I spent the whole afternoon in the heather of the highlands of Scotland in "Green and Gold". I am in love with Deirdre the heroine and have forgotten all about Eileen O'Kane! You know that I would never really love anyone but you.

Tuesday 15th December 1942
My darling, rumour has it that lots more letters have arrived from home. I hope and pray that it is true and that there will be one from you. Am still reading the book; nothing exciting happening these days. My love grows deeper and more true.

Wednesday 16th December 1942
My darling, I am so very happy these days because I love you so much. I have just confessed to Soper that I am the happiest man in the camp! And yet you know there is an aching in my heart – a longing for home and you.

Thursday 17th December 1942
I had a wonderful run around the padang tonight. I am going to start my games in the near future again. I have long envied the other officers playing football and hockey. My darling, I love you a little bit more today.

Friday 18th December 1942
My darling, I went to see Benny today and he really is coming to lunch tomorrow. Had a long chat with Dickey D. at hospital today. Also saw Gordon Brown and Freddie Watkins. I enjoyed the walk – also the biscuits and sweets! God bless you.

Weight 12 st 2 lbs

Saturday 19th December 1942
My darling, I was at a marvellous concert in the Australian camp – I laughed till my sides were aching! I was in love with the "girls"! "Benny" came to lunch at last and had a nice afternoon together. We are having 20 new officers tomorrow. (It was Mike Cooper who took us to the concert.)

Sunday 20th December 1942
I have had a wonderfully happy day thank God. Isn't it strange that the priest said today that he is offering Holy Mass tomorrow for all our relatives and friends at home that God might bring them peace of mind that they might not worry about us here, that He might comfort and console them. I can only manage Sunday Mass but how I long for daily Mass. We are to have Midnight Mass in our chapel here. Father Whelan is coming across on Thursday evening for it. I will also have Mass at 8.30 am on Christmas morning. Our chapel is beginning to look very "Christmassy" – "Gloria in Exclesis Deo" is all ready with holly painted around it! The gramophone concert tonight is Beethoven's Symphony No. 9 in D flat; also the Messiah.

Monday 21st December 1942
My darling, I had a marvellous dream about you last night. You looked lovely Eileen and I loved you as much as ever. It has been a quiet day with nothing exciting to report. I am sure you are having a hectic time preparing for Christmas. Do you remember my Christmas Card of 2 years ago when I plucked up enough courage to write "love – Frank"! I was cheeky then but I adore you now.

Tuesday 22nd December 1942
My darling, I feel ashamed at myself for not being at home with you this Christmas as I had promised. Oh I do hope that the candlesticks reached you safely. Don't forget to burn a candle for me. Nothing today; still happy; much expert dancing! God bless you.

Wednesday 23rd December 1942
I am now reading "Crippled Splendour" (Evan John) – an historical novel about James I of Scotland. A quiet day but a happy one; I wish you could have sat beside me in the garden this afternoon – I was reading in the sun under a banana tree.

Thursday 24th December 1942
I had my first game of football today and enjoyed it thoroughly. I can actually kick the ball! Our chapel looks perfect this evening and all ready for Midnight Mass – dozens of candles, waving palms and tropical plants, and an electric spotlight. Father Whelan is staying the night with us and saying 8.30 Mass on Christmas Day. You know that my thoughts are ever with you, but tonight more especially. I am writing this at a beautiful writing desk (cabinet bureau) – Freddie Crossley gave to me before going to Japan. I have just received a Christmas Card and a calendar – the card has shamrocks and holly on it; the calendar – a map of Ireland and England! God bless you my darling.

Friday Christmas Day 1942
My own darling, let me wish you all the joy and all the blessings that you deserve today. My first Christmas Day as a P.O.W. and oh what happiness I have had. It all began with Midnight Mass in our little attap-roofed chapel on the padang. A quiet little Australian priest said Mass and gave us a beautiful talk; the Dutch choir sang the mass and the usual carols. The whole setting was perfect – I have never appreciated Midnight Mass properly.

There were about 100 at Communion. Mike Cooper was with me, also Major Spencer and Peter Coope in the Sanctuary. As I walked back to my room after Mass having wished all and sundry a happy Christmas, I knew that my Christmas would be happy too. It was a silent night, a cloudless sky, a moon above *but* NO SNOW! Mass again this morning at 8.30 a.m. and it was for you, Eileen. We had a riceless breakfast. I forgot to tell you that the Mess was decorated with paper flags last night; I noticed that the Irish flag was missing so I coloured in a large Tricolour and put it at a prominent place at the top of the room. There were many catcalls etc. but nobody dared touch my flag! *My* flag was shown to the Area Commander. Some Dutch officers came to visit us this morning and I was pleased that at least one of them recognised the Irish flag! Somebody superimposed a small Red Hand on my flag to annoy me but I was charmed and wrote *"An lámh dearg [in] uachtar"* (*"Up the Red Hand!"* — the battle cry of the O'Neill clan of Ulster) under it! I made a Christmas Card for my best girl, composed a verse which I dedicated to her, and sealed it in an envelope (address) all ready for posting. Then came a riceless lunch (light). Burgess and I then went off to hospital and saw Brown, Watkins and McKenzie; also Campbell (Belfast), Major Bloom and Col. Davidson (I.M.S.). They were all in terrific form. Back we came for tea (+sugar and milk!) – bread, butter and jam! A bath and then a drink at the Anglers' Rest outside the mess. Then dinner for which I loudly clanged the gong and helped to serve the roast pork and *real* Christmas Pudding! My flag was still waving after dinner. We then had a concert by the men – it was grand fun. Back to the Mess for cocoa (milk & sugar!) and toffee! Then a sick call to Colin Campbell (2/2 Gurkhas) across the padang at 1.30 a.m. Then singing till 2.30 a.m. I sang Danny Boy, The Harp That Once, The Rose of Tralee, Wearing of the Green, Minstrel Boy, Come back to Erin. For the past 36 hours I have been heckled about Ireland, Irishmen, and Irish flags, but all in fun; everyone agreed that the Irish songs were refreshing after Widdecombe Fair!!

Saturday Boxing Day 1942
We are back again to realities today – work & rice! It has been a quiet day but restful after yesterday's activities. May God bless you.

Sunday 27th December 1942
Mass and Holy Communion today for you; Benediction this evening. I had a long chat with the Irish-Australian priest afterwards (hasn't seen Ireland for 13 years!). God bless you.

Monday 28th December 1942
A day of peace and quiet. Your little Robinson & Cleaver photographs are still on my cigarette case with your lock of hair. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 29th December 1942
I have been studying a book on nervous diseases today – I need all the medical study possible, as I am getting rusty out here. I am making you a very special calendar for the new year but heaven knows when you will receive it. I love you.

Wednesday 30th December 1942
Letters are coming for officers and men nowadays but none for yours truly as yet. I am still studying a lot and learning things I have never know about before. Glendinning had a letter from his father at Portrush yesterday. My darling, I hope you are having grand holidays. God bless you.

Thursday 31st December 1942
New Year's Eve – what a year this has been as a P.O.W.! Where it has gone I know not. I have been busy making a diet return for the I.J.A. this evening. There is a bonfire in the lines and there should be fun and games tonight. God bless you.

Chapter 2:
1943

Friday 1st January 1943
I had a hectic night celebrating the New Year's arrival. We had songs around the bonfire till midnight; then all joined hands and sang Auld Lang Sang. Then up to the Mess – the others in by the front door and I around to the back windows to await developments! I spied two Englishmen tearing down my Tricolour; so in the window I leaped and collared them both. We had a wild melée over tables and chairs and I ended up with an Englishman tucked under each arm – it was a famous victory over the English! All in fun! Then I climbed up and removed the Union Jack! I was elected M.C. for the singing in the Mess, made a table my platform and opened the proceedings with "Believe Me if All Those …". All the officers did their turn – including 3 Dutchmen. I sang three more Irish songs and led all the community singing. I was very happy with these lads of Oxford and Cambridge etc. Our concert ended at 2 a.m. I was up for Mass and Holy Communion at 8.30 and then I was happier still and nearer to you. It has been a happy day too. My room is now a blaze of colour – beautiful ladies, pagodas, Chinamen, temples, bullock carts and sailing junks. My darling, a happy and a holy New Year to you and may this year see me restored to you again. I shall *always* love you, Eileen. God bless you.

Saturday 2nd January 1943
Lt. Col. Davidson I.M.S. arrived today and is living next door to me. He is the new A.D.M.S. of 11 Div. I have made a glutton of myself eating toffee today. My darling I love you with all my heart and soul. Dentist had a letter today.

Sunday 3rd January 1943
I have had another happy day – thanks to our dear Lord.

Monday 4th January 1943
We had Benediction last night that made my Sunday's happiness complete. My darling, I love you as I have never loved or thought I could love. A quiet day. The rats have been even eating my statue of the Sacred Heart!

Tuesday 5th January 1943
I did a bit of sun-bathing today in the Padang with Peter Coope (a Catholic officer). People out here would die without the hot sun. This is the cool season, but it is just hot enough. I love you, Eileen and I shall always love you.

Wednesday 6th January 1943
My darling, I have just returned from a pantomime, "Cinderella" done by the Australians – it was wonderful. As usual I fell in love with Cinderella and roared at the ugly sisters. The costumes and scenery were superb. The deaf "boots" was grand so was Prince Charming and the King. God bless you.

Thursday 7th January 1943
I have started Lawrence's "Seven Pillars of Wisdom". It has been glorious today – a strong cool wind with lots of sunshine – *almost* like home. How I wish I were at home now with you. Nothing else to report today.

Friday 8th January 1943
Did you know that your Frank is a very famous person – my name appears in the local pantomime advertising lantern slides; "See Doctor Murray, he'd love to see you." (reference sore feet etc.). I have been studying the ring

catalogue of Mappin & Webb today my darling. I have awful pangs of reproach when I think how I have let you down in that subject. But I just could not do anything else about it. We have been "ratting" today in the padang.

Saturday 9th January 1943
My new medical orderly is a Cambridge mathematician! I feel sorry for him having to mix as a gunner with a bunch of toughs. However his new job has removed him from the barrack room and now he has a place to himself where he can study and read and play cards. Standish, Soper, Rowe, Wilcock and I sat under the moon and talked about love. I gave no information away but I could see how little they knew about it. Thank God I love you so much, Eileen.

Sunday 10th January 1943
Confession, Mass, Communion, benediction, Rosary and *you* have made this another perfect day for me. There was a grass fire in the 15" gun position today – many fire beaters were making feeble efforts to put it out. I dashed along with two buckets of water and put the whole show out! It was dangerous because of so much ammunition and explosives in the magazine. God bless you.

Monday 11th January 1943
I met Father Sexton (an Irish Australian priest) last night – he is great fun. There are 3 Australians (Irish) now visit our chapel – Frs. Dolan, Rodgers and Sexton. A quiet day at the bottom of our garden reading Seven Pillars. Saw a grand play tonight "The Admirable Crichton" (Barrie) – I roared with laughter. Our dog Jock, had a classic duel with a local hound and won easily. God bless you, darling.

Tuesday 12th January 1943
A quiet uneventful day. Three Dutch officers to dinner tonight. God bless you my darling.

Wednesday 13th January 1943
Went to hospital this afternoon to see Gordon Brown, Sawyer and Watkins. They were in grand form. The Dutch people are all leaving for Bangkok tomorrow. I am sorry Dr Versteeg is going. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 14th January 1943
Just like a day at home – dull, cloudy and cool. I am still very fit thank God. I am so very happy these days and only one thing is missing – you my darling. I have started a series of anatomy, physiology and first aid lectures to my medical orderlies (including the Cambridge man!). God bless you.

Friday 15th January 1943
A quiet happy day. Not much work to do. The rest of the Dutch are going off tomorrow but 1000 more will arrive on Sunday. This means heaps of work to do, but I don't mind a bit. I do thank God for this ideal P.O.W. camp – the chance of having Mass and Communion weekly is wonderful; the food is good, climate is ideal; plenty of clothes & boots; $10 a month. I am having far too nice a time here – much better than in Kuantan rubber! God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 16th January 1943
I have now got the words of "My Old County Down" and the "Mountains of Mourne" – I am learning them off for St. Patrick's Day! Rosary in Chapel + many trimmings; my usual lecture and now to bed.

Sunday 17th January 1943

Another wonderful Sunday. Rose at 8 a.m.; sick parade 8.30–9.30; Mass and Communion at 10.30 a.m.; breakfast 11.30; weekly medical returns; lunch 1.30; sick parade 2.30; tea 4 p.m.; rain – study; 6 p.m. bath; dinner 6.30; benediction & Rosary at 7.45 p.m.; cocoa 8.30; gramophone concert 8.45–10.30; bed 11 p.m. That is my usual Sunday. The earlier Mass at 8.30 clashes with my sick parade. I served Mass today. I served also at evening Devotion. Oh my darling, am I not very privileged to be allowed so near to Him. God bless you.

Monday 18th January 1943

My darling, I am still happy and I still love you. I shall have a big job soon: two inoculations twice to each man in the area against typhoid and dysentery. 900 Dutch troops are due in to our area this evening. This means more work – thank heavens. I am reading "Quality Chase" (Marjorie Titlman) – it's all about B'ham. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 19th January 1943

The Dutch did not arrive but are now due at any moment. I have had a quiet day again. Dysentery is re-appearing in the camp again. More letters arrived today but none for me. May be one will come tomorrow on your birthday. I have a present for you! God bless you.

Wednesday 20th January 1943 (Your Birthday)

My own darling, this should have been such a happy day for us but it has been sad for me. I have been lonely and missed you more today than at any time before. Many happy returns of the day, my darling. I am giving you my travelling clock as a birthday present – it is all I have to give. God bless you.

Thursday 21st January 1943

Two things about your birthday. I played in a big football match for R.A. against the Gurkhas. I was right back and played really well. It was a scoreless draw. I had many, many congratulations. It was like old Cherryvale and Corrigan Park. Nothing much happened today. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 22nd January 1943

Last night I sat in the moonlight outside the Mess and whistled my favourite hornpipe. The others were delighted with it. Someone suggested Soldiers Song – and I obliged! Then came John Barry and Mountains of Mourne; Eileen Aroon (which some vulgar Scotchman claimed to be Robin Adair!) and Eileen Alannah. I met Fr. Sexton today at an Australian rugby match. He was at All Hallows with Mick Lavelle and Jimmy Lappin – both friends of mine. Mick is now in New Zealand & Jimmy is in England. Fr. Sexton has played hurley and Gaelic football, been to Croke Park etc. He is to lend me In Search of Ireland (H.V. Morton). God bless you – I love you Eileen.

Saturday 23rd January 1943

I had a grand game of hockey today – we lost 4-0 but I loved it. Marvellous breezy weather, cool but sunny for past week. I am in marvellous health thank God and full of beans. My darling I love and adore you with all my heart and soul.

Sunday 24th January 1943

Mass and Communion; Rosary and Benediction – and happiness galore. I served at Mass and at Devotions. I love being near to Him and you my darling. I have a new batman now (Paddy McElligott) – a grand Irish character. My darling I love you still!

Monday 25th January 1943

My mass inoculation has begun and so I have been busy all day long jabbing needles into arms! I am still happy – a new Frank Murray has emerged from this prisoner of war life. I am gay and lively – apparently never serious! But for many moments by day and night I am serious and love you with all my heart and soul.

Tuesday 26th January 1943

I have very full days now – sick parades, 80 inoculations daily; lectures to the nursing orderlies, about 4 hours daily lecture on medicine to Athel Long[5] who is taking up medicine after the war. Still I am happy. God bless you, Eileen Alannah.

Wednesday 27th January 1943

I went to hospital today and saw Rusty Howell & Spencer – both have amoebic dysentery. I called to see Atkinson and Meeson (2 troops of 80 A/TK). Still very busy with injections and lectures – finished at 11.30 last night. I love you more today. God bless you my child.

Thursday 28th January 1943

I have a slight reaction this evening after my anti-dysentery injection this morning (self-inflicted). Bob Skene hurt his leg yesterday and is in bed (he is a nice lad and 3rd best polo player in the world). My darling, I love you more than ever tonight.

Friday 29th January 1943

I am going off to our local concert tonight. I have had a quiet day with the afternoon free. My darling, I sang all our favourite songs at the bottom of our garden last night. I love you and I shall always love you. God bless you.

Saturday 30th January 1943

My darling, the concert was terrific last night and I laughed my heart out. I am resigned to God's will now to wait and wait and keep alive to meet you again after the war is over. Then our happiness will really begin.

Sunday 31st January 1943

My darling, another happy Sunday – Mass, Communion, Rosary, Benediction. It seemed to rain all the day long; I am reading "Sense & Sensibility" still. My lectures continue unabated. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 1st February 1943

A quiet day after a busy morning. I am sitting on the steps of the Mess looking down on our lovely garden. We can also see the sea from our garden. I am off to some work now (7 p.m.), then some cricket ball practice, then Rosary, lectures -> bed!

Tuesday 2nd February 1943

I had a grand game of football this evening after dinner. The officers' team beat the sergeants 3-0. I thoroughly enjoyed myself. Paddy McElligott is spoiling me here with all sorts of comforts unheard of in P.O.W. life. Father Ward is now living next door to me. He has lost his left leg poor man and is very depressed. I don't know how he will manage at Mass. I gave him a shirt and a blanket today – his were stolen in hospital. Now for a lecture to Athel Long (his mother is an authoress Marjorie Bowen or George Preedy).

[5] Athelstan (Athel) Long is covered in the Postscript.

Wednesday 3rd February 1943
My darling, I had a lovely walk to Southern Area today. Called in the hospital to see Gordon Brown. He had an operation two days ago and a piece of bone removed from his leg. My darling, I love you still above all else in the world. God bless you.

Thursday 4th February 1943
My usual busy morning with inoculation, but a quiet afternoon. The weather is glorious nowadays and the food not so bad. We read of 18 large mail bags arriving in Tokyo from home – I hope they come to Singapore soon. God bless you, my darling.

Friday 5th February 1943
Another happy day with you, my darling. May God bless you for the happiness you have given to me in this Prison camp. May He bless you and all yours now and always.

Saturday 6th February 1943
I made a calendar for Delling (A.D. Corps) today. In the afternoon I was mending the roof of the chapel with corrugated iron. I had a visit from Wolff of the 27 Fd. Ambulance. He is in high spirits. No lectures today or tomorrow. God bless you Eileen.

Sunday 7th February 1943
My darling, what a happy day is just ending for me. I have been writing more in my diary today and have now reached Suez in my travels. God bless & keep you Eileen. (P.S. I lent my Irish Poems to Father Sexton today – he's a Galway man.)

Monday 8th February 1943
My own darling, another day and I love you even more. Somehow I have missed you today as never before. That awful aching at heart is unbearable at times but I offer it all up to Him. Oh when shall we meet again, my Eileen? God bless you.

Tuesday 9th February 1943
Big moves are due to start next Monday but thank heavens I am staying behind here with the Mountain Regt. However we are moving our quarters to another part of the area. I was at hospital today and saw Gordon Brown – he's in grand form. I struck up with Mick Murphy, an Irishman in the A.I.F. He is a Dublin man and has been in Australia for 20 years. I intend seeing more of Mick. God bless you, my darling.

Wednesday 10th February 1943
It seems the dentist, Col. Davidson, Fr. Ward and myself are to remain here in these quarters when the big move takes place. I can never love you enough, Eileen.

Thursday 11th February 1943
It has rained the whole day long; I have had my T.A.B. inoculation this morning. I am ready to go off to chapel and rosary; then comes my lecture to Athel Long. I *will* come back to you alive soon.

Friday 12th February 1943
My darling, I have just returned from an Australian concert with Fr. Ward. It was lovely – especially Schubert's "Ave Maria" sung by *my* friend Jack Knibbs. Fr. Sexton was with us at the Concert. He is in raptures over my Irish poems. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 13th February 1943
It has been raining most of the day. 20,000 men had to parade today for a Japanese film. It is cooler now a lot thank heavens. God bless you.

Sunday 14th February 1943
Oh what a happy day – as usual. Mass, Communion, Benediction, Rosary – all for you, Eileen. Father Sexton has lent me "In Search of Ireland" – you really must know him darling and love him as I do (and everyone too). He had Woods and Kaibe with him. So we had grand singing "Hail Queen of Heaven", "To Jesus' Heart" etc. The two Australians are good chaps and anxious to see Ireland. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 15th February 1943
My darling, I have been thinking of that Christmas card I sent you in 1940. Oh what would have happened to me if you hadn't written to me on 29th December – Eileen I shudder to think about it. God bless you for saving my life.

Tuesday 16th February 1943
We must always have "In Search of Ireland" in our library. Have you bought *our* dog yet, Eileen?

Wednesday 17th February 1943
I have finished my book "Standing on the Hill of Tara" – I feel as if I have parted with a friend. John Moss, a Belfast M.O., arrived here today with Young the Scot M.O. God bless you.

Thursday 18th February 1943
Had a long chat with Young and Moss today. My big inoculation hurts badly – especially after my chain gang activities today for 3 hours in the Sun. I was at the head of a team of officers pulling two heavy trailers over to our new quarters. I am moving tomorrow. I am off to a concert tonight in our Rice Bowl theatre! God bless you.

Friday 19th February 1943
My darling, the big move is completed! I have blisters on my hands and feet; my back is burned and blistered – but I am happy. Our new home at Div. H.Q. is a barrack room; I sleep next to Knox and opposite me is Long. I do love you, Eileen.

Darling, do you remember [newspaper clipping] "Sunday Morning, December 29, 1940"?

Saturday 20th February 1943
My darling, I have settled well into my new abode. I had two visitors this afternoon. Cpls. McGurk and Weston of my M.A.C. They gave me all the news of the others. Most of them have gone up country. Still I feel that I belong much more to the poor old Indians of the Field Ambulance. Eileen, *when* will you write to me? God bless you darling.

Sunday 21st February 1943
Mass, Communion, Rosary, Benediction – and lots of happiness with thoughts of you, my darling. I wrote my second postcard of my P.O.W. life – and I sent it to father, but with love to you, Eileen. I hope it reaches him safely. God bless you alannah.

Monday 22nd February 1943
I have little work to do nowadays – only a few men to look after. I love you, Eileen.

Tuesday 23rd February 1943
My darling, I am now doing lots of manual work – wood hauling and sawing today! I feel so very fit now that the exercise is beneficial. I am still giving many lectures to Athel – we have become good friends. We have a Japanese parade each evening now at 7 p.m.

Wednesday 24th February 1943
Another day gone and I love you more than yesterday. My tiny surgeon's hands are blistered from wood sawing this afternoon. I am off to a concert here tonight by the Australians. There is roll call first and then a football match. Life is good. God bless you.

Thursday 25th February 1943
A terrific day of wood hauling and a march for medical examination by the Japanese. Still I feel happy because I have something to do during all my waking hours. This is the secret of prisoner of war existence. I love you Eileen. God bless you.

Friday 26th February 1943
Another hectic morning hauling wood. I am terrifically strong again thank God and I am volunteering tomorrow again. I met a major (provost) today who came out on the H.M.T. Ettrick with me in 1940. My friendship with Athel grows.

Saturday 27th February 1943
Yet another morning wood-hauling. I am tired and happy this evening – tomorrow is my lucky day. Confession tonight at 8 p.m. I am now reading "Rogue Herries & Judith Paris" (Walpole). I do love you so very much tonight.

Sunday 28th February 1943
It is 7.30 p.m.! Mass is at 7.45 p.m. every Sunday and Wednesday evenings – we have a special dispensation from fasting. It will be heavenly having Mass & Communion twice a week. This is to suit the garden and wood cutting parties that now inhabit our area. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 1st March 1943
I must tell you all about another happy day. It began last night with Mass and Communion. This morning I had lots of wood sawing and have blisters on my hands. In the afternoon I went with driller and Knox to Southern Area. Saw Peter Coope and the lads. By the way Fr. Ronald Knox is Rawk Knox's uncle. We went to see an Australian concert tonight in our area. It was good. God bless you.

Tuesday 2nd March 1943
My darling, my blisters have been painful today and so I had a rest from sawing and digging boreholes. It has rained heavily all afternoon. Now I am ready for roll call and Rosary. I may go to a lecture tonight by a chap who was on a German Raider.

Wednesday 3rd March 1943
I went to the Aussie big concert last night with Terry Wright. I meet Frank Woods, Knibbs, and Fr. Sexton in the actors' quarters. It was a wonderful concert; I was introduced to John Woods back stage (he is the leading lady)

after the show. A quiet day; walked to Southern Area with Athel and met Peter Coope and his lads. I carried a "broodie" hen all the way. Had mass and Communion this evening; lecture to Athel. Happy. I love you.

Thursday 4th March 1943
Had a hectic morning sawing big logs of wood and heaving them up on the flat roof. The afternoon was spent in drawing sketches of the nervous system for Athel and giving him lectures. There is another concert here tonight again! I may go later. God bless you.

Friday 5th March 1943
My darling, the concert was hopeless last night. Nothing much doing tonight. Sawing wood and heaving heavenwards all morning. Football match at 5 p.m. – it was washed out by a thunderstorm after 20 minutes play. I do love you so very much tonight Eileen.

Saturday 6th March 1943
Forty bags of mail have arrived but no letter for me yet! Hard morning sawing and hauling wood. *When* oh when shall I see you again to tell you about my love.

Sunday 7th March 1943
My darling, it is a wet Sunday evening and I am ready to go off to chapel for Mass. I have had another happy day; first wood hauling and then sawing. I am still reading my "Rogue Herries, Judith Paris". God bless you.

Monday 8th March 1943
Another grand day of sawing, reading, lecturing etc. Time passes quickly nowadays. No letter for me yet, but my darling, I do not mind terribly – I only want your love. I am happy with my thoughts and memories of you. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 9th March 1943
Pancake Tuesday – we had pancakes for sweet at dinner tonight! Sawing wood all morning and hauling it on the roof. Oh my darling I love you so very much these days – I am so happy but there is forever that longing in my heart to see you again.

Wednesday 10th March 1943
Ash Wednesday and now I am off to Chapel for Mass, Communion and Ashes. There is plenty of *fasting* and abstinence in this camp in Lent! No word of any letter from you yet, Eileen. Went to hospital this morning, saw Gordon Brown, Howell, Glendinning, Spencer etc. Met a Major Babington last night (a Catholic yet a relation of our Attorney General!).

Thursday 11th March 1943
My darling, I love you even more tonight. Fr. Sexton came to say Mass last night and gave us the Ashes. I am now the regular Mass server and I love it. A quiet day; lots of reading Herries; I am to watch a football match tonight. God bless you.

Friday 12th March 1943
I went to hospital this morning but still no letter for me from home as yet. Met Mr. Wolff and had a long chat with him about old times. A quiet day with lots of reading. I am off to parade but I love you. God bless you.

Saturday 13th March 1943

A hectic morning sawing wood. I attended a court martial this afternoon – the prisoner was acquitted mostly on my evidence! I refused to swear on a C. of E. bible! So I took an ordinary oath without a bible. I am now off to A.I.F. concert.

Sunday 14th March 1943

A terrific concert last night – met with Athel and Standish. Frank and John Woods were terrific. Met Frank & Fr. Sexton after the show. Quiet day of study on the roof with Athel. Football match, Mass & social in Sergeants' Mess tonight.

Monday 15th March 1943

Mass and Communion last night. Then came a *marvellous* concert. An Irish violinist (Dennis East, London Philharmonic) was wonderful; a grand tenor called King and other good turns. Today I visited P. Coope and M. Cooper in S. Area. Another concert (A.I.F.) tonight.

Tuesday 16th March 1943

I awoke this morning and dashed off to hospital after breakfast. I rushed up to the Officers' Mess and there saw my name on the list for a letter – in brackets was "from fiancée Eileen O'Kane"! And now my darling I have only to wait a week or so until your precious letter is censored by the Japanese. I cannot describe my feelings to you after 13 months a P.O.W. with no news at all – I am so happy. "Paddy", my batman produced "Shamrock" this evening for me! God bless you my darling.

Wednesday 17th March 1943 St. Patrick's Day

I forgot to mention that I had a long chat with "Benny" at the hospital yesterday – he is thin and wasted looking. He remembered your name and congratulated me on the letter. I have had a glorious St. Patrick's Day thank God – I wore my shamrock all day long. I had Peter Coope as my guest for the evening; we went to a football match at 5 p.m.; a wonderful dinner at 6.30; we both had mass and Communion at 7.30; then came a truly marvellous celebrity concert – Dennis East[6] etc.; Schubert's and Gounod's "Ave Maria". Peter enjoyed his evening tremendously and went off home at 10.30. I love you more today, Eileen.

Thursday 18th March 1943

My own darling, you should see my sunburn nowadays. I am in the sun all day long – wearing nothing but pants. A hectic morning sewing. The afternoon on the flat roof studying medicine with Athel. God bless you.

Friday 19th March 1943

My darling, I am just living for your letter to arrive. A quiet day, no excitement. I am now waiting for parade, football match, and Rosary. God bless you Eileen.

Saturday 20th March 1943

My darling I love you. No sign of your letter as yet – may have to wait for a month or 6 weeks for it. Am going to confession tonight then football match and then the Co-optimist Concert party. A hard morning's sawing. God bless you.

[6] Dennis East was a professional musician who was first violinist with the London Philharmonic.

Sunday 21st March 1943
Went to Southern Area with "driller" and had lunch with Peter Coope. All the folk there were in good form. "Paddy" produced a *new* pair of trousers for me today! I am getting ready for Mass now. No letter has arrived from you yet. God bless you.

Monday 22nd March 1943
Went to a concert in the Sergeants' Mess last night after Mass with Drs Young and Moss. It was really good. Went this afternoon to see Fr. Sexton in the Aussie camp. Have arranged to go to the A.I.F. concert with him on Wednesday night. I return "In Search of Ireland". Football match at 5 p.m. – we beat Sergeants 1-0 (we had 10 men). God bless you.

Tuesday 23rd March 1943
I hurt my knee at football yesterday and so I have been resting and dreaming today. Am doing a lot of medicine nowadays with Athel. I still love you, Eileen.

Wednesday 24th March 1943
I spent the morning and afternoon relaxing – resting my knee. I have completed an extensive scheme for examination of patients for Athel. Went to Mass and Communion at 7.30. Fr. Sexton said Mass and so off we went together to the A.I.F. concert with Athel and driller. It was a fair show. My Rosary was used for the monk. God bless.

Thursday 25th March 1943 (Annunciation)
The letters are rolling in for all the officers but none for me as yet. Still I am resigned to wait for your letter for a year if necessary. I still love you as much as that. God bless you.

Friday 26th March 1943
I am still taking things easy. No show tonight and so I spent 2 ½ hours sitting on the Padang with Athel talking of the past, and our future. God bless you.

Saturday 27th March 1943
Oh my own darling it has come at last and it has made me so very, very happy. To know that you and all at Beechwood and Spring Villa are well has taken a great load of anxiety off my mind; I am so very, very happy to know that you have now bought an engagement ring to your liking (I will love it too); I was anxious in case the cheque did not reach you in time; the snaps, the candlesticks, Thomasheen James, and the souvenirs all reached you thank God – the latter will not be procurable after the war. My darling, I do not deserve such a love as yours. I am broken hearted to know that you had to wait so long for news of me.

Sunday 28th March 1943
Thank God, you know by this time of my safety. I have had a quiet day and am now ready for Mass and Communion – God bless you.

Monday 29th March 1943
I have been darning and sewing today; made a pair of shorts by cutting down my old slacks. I have been reading and rereading your precious letter since it came – it has even been under my pillow at night. Now I may tell you that my only worry all these months has been you my darling and the anxiety and worry I have caused you. My darling, I am sorry.

Tuesday 30th March 1943
My own darling, it has been hot and sticky today. A quiet day and now it has ended. I am off to parade and then football match and Rosary.

Wednesday 31st March 1943
Some sledge hammer work this morning. My diary of the war has now reached Rawalpindi. A good football match at 5 p.m. when our area beat Southern Area. Mass and Communion – and oh how I prayed for you, Eileen. God bless you.

Thursday 1st April 1943
It is All Fools' Day and so I spent my morning chopping logs of wood with a huge axe – result: blisters on my hands. I reclined in the afternoon and now I am off to a concert at the Palladium (hospital area) to see "Dancing Tears". God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 2nd April 1943
My darling, I am still reading your letter, loving it more and more, loving you for being so loyal to so worthless a man, and loving you for all that you are. Oh how you must have suffered during all these months of waiting for news of me. I went to visit Fr. Dolan today – he played for Galway in Sigerson Cup in 1926!

Saturday 3rd April 1943
Wood hauling this morning in the rain. Confession tonight then football match. God bless you.

Sunday 4th April 1943
My darling, another of *our* days. Mass and Communion tonight are specially for you, Eileen. Fr. Watson said Mass. He has never been here before though he is the chief chaplain here. He is English, sandy haired, 6 ft 3 in high! Went to a very good concert in the Sergeants' Mess. One chap sang "Smiling Through".

Monday 5th April 1943
A quiet day; digging boreholes in the morning; patching my pants in the afternoon; and now for dinner, roll call, football match and Rosary. God bless you.

Tuesday 6th April 1943
My darling, I read and read your letter daily and I love you and it more and more every day. I did sawing and sewing this morning! I visited Fr. Sexton in the afternoon in the A.I.F. lines; he is in grand form. He returned my Irish poems. God bless you.

Wednesday 7th April 1943
I have heard awful news – that Mass and Communion may have to be discontinued after Easter. I am praying that this may not happen. These are of course my consolation as a P.O.W. Lots of sawing this morning. Now I am off to mass and Communion.

Thursday 8th April 1943
Wood chopping this morning. Jack Knibbs came this afternoon and told me that Frs. Dolan and Sexton are coming with us to see "Androcles & the Lion" tonight. God bless you.

Friday 9th April 1943
My darling, I had a wonderful morning felling huge coconut trees and hauling them into camp. I feel as strong as a horse these days thank God. God bless you.

Saturday 10th April 1943
Went to the A.I.F. concert last night and had a hectic time with Athel, Pete and "Driller". Wood hauling this morning and hockey at 5 p.m. against the sergeants – we lost 4-1! God bless you.

Sunday 11th April 1943
Another concert last night by 18 Div concert party – not so good. A Dutch officer hypnotised a man and made him rigid as a board! A French cabaret singer (Shanghai) was good. Went to Southern Area this morning with "Driller"; met Coope. I love you, Eileen.

Monday 12th April 1943
Wonderful news today of the arrival of 40 bags of mail from home. Oh my darling, I am selfish enough to want another letter from you. I have been reading "Famous Trials" (Birkenhead) and doing diagrams for Athel. Two big football matches tonight and a concert. Mass and Communion last night – I was so happy. Met Fr. Watson and had a long talk with him. God bless you.

Tuesday 13th April 1943
My darling, 7000 men are leaving here soon and going up country. I am to remain behind. Went to hospital this afternoon – met Fr. O'Mahoney and Capt. Williams, Deverell, and Mayne. Have now got a Gray's Anatomy for Athel. I love you, Eileen.

Wednesday 14th April 1943
A quiet day with 103 vaccinations – thank heavens for some medical work! A concert tonight also by Australians. We had Danny Boy on Sunday night by an Irish Aussie. God bless you.

Thursday 15th April 1943
Another quiet day with lots of day dreams of you and home. I am reading "Old Brandy" but not interested in it. More work this evening (inoculation). God bless you.

Friday 16th April 1943
Nothing much today save reading another novel to pass the time. My usual inoculations and read (or two) at your beautiful letter. I still say "Good morning" and "Good night" to you, my darling. God bless you.

Saturday 17th April 1943
Wood hauling this morning and then – a marvellous surprise my darling. Another letter from you! Dated August 14th. My own darling, if you could know the joy that wells up in my heart when I read your letters. It makes life bearable in this P.O.W. Some day, please God, I shall be able to thank you for all these little things that you have done for me. Thank God you are alright and everyone at home is fit. Imagine old Philip an engineer *and* working. Imagine Frances married; imagine *you* at Beechwood! God bless you.

Sunday 18th April 1943
My darling, I have been up to the hospital this afternoon and found that there is another letter on its way from you. Oh my Eileen, I feel ashamed that I am not doing my bit in writing, but we have only been allowed to write two postcards in the past year. God bless you.

Monday 19th April 1943
Do you know that I read both your letters every day? They bring me so much nearer to you, darling. It must have been awful writing to someone you didn't know what had happened to him. God bless you child for such wonderful letters. Nothing today. God bless you.

Tuesday 20th April 1943
Your third letter (4th August) came this morning and made me a happier than I ever thought I could be as a prisoner. Oh if only you knew that I am safe and well. You are so loyal and true to me. God bless you.

Wednesday 21st April 1943
My darling, I had a glorious swim this morning with the salt water party. My swimming is stronger than ever before, thank God. Went to hospital in the afternoon and found that Una's letter is coming soon. Last night I had a pleasant evening in the moonlight on the roof. I read your letters all over again, looked at your snaps and loved you more than ever. God bless you.

Thursday 22nd April 1943
No Mass last night owing to rain. Another swim in the sea today with Jimmy James and our dog Jack. The moonlight nights are glorious on our roof here. I can sit and dream of my beloved far off in Erin's Isle. God bless you.

Friday 23rd April 1943 (Good Friday)
Had a glorious swim in the sea at 3.30 p.m. with "Pete", Jimmy, Harry, etc. If you should meet your Frank clad in a pair of shorts (only) walking down to bathe (no shower). Mr Wolff came to say goodbye – I gave him snaps of Kroh and my address. He's going up country. God bless you.

Saturday 24th April 1943
My darling, I had a wonderful surprise today – your Ballynahinch letter arrived (June '42) and now I love you to distraction. No letter coming from Una. I have had all your letters to date thank God. Went to hospital this morning – met Doyle & Fr. Whelan. Had lunch in S. Area with Peter Coope; met Mike Cooper. God bless you my darling.

Sunday 25th April 1943 (Easter Sunday)
So far my Easter has not been exciting – had a bad cold, fever, and headaches all day; no swimming. Now I am going off to Mass and Holy Communion. Thank God some altar breads and wine have come from Singapore. God bless you Eileen.

Monday 26th April 1943
My darling, I had a hectic morning with a trailer party – drawing kit for 3rd Corps officers (colonels); we laughed our sides out. Pete Coope came in the afternoon to visit us. Pork pie for dinner! A terrific Aussie musical comedy after dinner with Athel, Freddie, Pete. God bless you.

Tuesday 27th April 1943
I am now a divisional wood sawer – for the week only. I have been sawing all morning and afternoon and feel very fit, thank God. God bless you, darling.

Wednesday 28th April 1943
Another tough morning and afternoon sawing at the wood dump with Athel, French, Rawle and [illegible]. No work tomorrow – it is Tenno Heika's birthday. God bless you.

Thursday 29th April 1943
Johnny Raw and Terry Wright are going up country tonight – only 6,000 men left + hospital and they will have left soon. No matter what happens, I love you Eileen.

Friday 30th April 1943
A trailer job – a ton of rice this morning from BSD – I loved it. I am now reading John Buchan's "The Courts of the Morning". 3,000 more troops leaving next week; only 3,000 left. I still love you, you silly child (for loving me). God bless you.

Saturday 1st May 1943
Wood stacking and hauling in the morning – thank God for something to do. I am not on the new party going up country thank heavens. Peter Coope came over this afternoon – he is in a dilemma about going or staying. My darling, I shall love you always.

Sunday 2nd May 1943
I now sleep on the roof at nights – it's so very cool. Paddy is very worried about me and says I'll be catching cold or rheumatism. I have been reading all day. Now I am off to Mass & Holy Communion – thank God for them. God bless you Eileen.

Monday 3rd May 1943
A hectic afternoon with a trailer party at the jail – Rawle, Knox, Trench and I had grand fun. Still reading a lot. Have heard that Fr. O'Mahoney is coming to live here. God bless you.

Tuesday 4th May 1943
Wood sawing in the morning – oh it was hot. I have been reading "For Whom the Bell Tolls" (Ernest Hemingway). Big moves are still in the air and everyone is unsettled at present. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 5th May 1943
Fr. O'Mahoney and Fr. Whelan came to see me this morning. The former is coming here as Chaplain to the Area. Eileen, I wish you could meet him. He is young and tall and a good priest. Trailer fatigue, hockey match – medicals beat officers 1-0. I played well at right back! John Moss (Queens) was in great form. God bless you.

Thursday 6th May 1943
My darling, I have been lazy today and done little work. I may go out with the wood cutters tomorrow. There are no concerts nowadays and life should be dull. God bless you.

Friday 7th May 1943
A terrific day out cutting down trees three miles away. The work is very hard but I love it. We had a hefty lunch of vegetables and rice. If only you could see me as a lumberjack! God bless you.

Saturday 8th May 1943 (Charlie's Birthday)
Another tough day in the Ulu cutting trees. The Japanese guards always give us cigarettes – they seem a decent lot. God bless you.

Sunday 9th May 1943
My darling, Athel and all the lads are going up country this week and alas I am not going. I went to the DDMS in the afternoon but he could not help because two other doctors had been already nominated. I am furious about it all because I want to be with my pals. I have prayed to the Holy Ghost for guidance. Mass and Communion at 7.45 a.m. I served Fr. O'Mahoney's Mass. God bless you.

Monday 10th May 1943
My wood cutting days are over & I am doing medicine again with 18 Div. sick. I have tried again to go with the lads but no success yet. Went to hospital today and saw Gordon Brown – he is still in bed (since early December). Pete Coope is going up country too. My darling I love you. God bless you.

Tuesday 11th May 1943
My darling, I have been detailed to go to Japan with 900 troops very soon. I shall tell you all about it tomorrow. God bless you.

Wednesday 12th May 1943
My darling, I have details of our trip. Fr. O'Mahoney is coming with us and so is my Paddy, also Lord de Ramsey! No date given yet. All my pals go off tomorrow night. We have all had a hectic day ending with duck for dinner and songs from the Pals. God bless you Eileen.

Thursday 13th May 1943
Everyone is very excited about the moves. Athel is not going tonight after all – his move has been postponed. Had a long chat with Fr. O'Mahoney today. I am the S.M.O. of the party; the O.C. is Lt. Col. Byrne (a Catholic) – his adjutant is also a Catholic. God bless you.

Friday 14th May 1943
Went to hospital this morning to arrange about medical equipment for the journey. Met Fr. Whelan and Paddy D. Mass and Communion this morning (also on Wednesday). Thank God Fr. O'Mahoney is travelling.

Saturday 15th May 1943
Had sudden orders this morning from Changi. I hated saying goodbye to Athel and my friends. Left Changi at 1 p.m.; went to Singapore in a crowded lorry; kit searched; embarked at 7 p.m.; 382 of us in this hold![7] The heat is awful, but I love you.

Sunday 16th May 1943
Set sail at dawn after a shocking night. I am next to Fr. O'Mahoney and am feeding him up. Food is not *too* bad – rice or vegetables; not too many sick as yet thank God. We have 2 weeks more of this "hold". My darling you are nearer to my heart this night than ever before. God bless you Eileen.

Monday 17th May 1943
My darling, another day ended, but thank God a better one – it is now raining! We are in convoy with 3 other vessels heading for Saigon. We are to remain there for a short time and then move off again. God bless you.

[7] This figure is just for one of the ship's holds. The record (see http://www.combinedfleet.com/Wales_t.htm) shows that, on this journey, there were 950 POWs on the Wales Maru, made up of 600 British, 300 Australians and 50 Americans.

Tuesday 18th May 1943
We sighted the Condore Islands this evening – they looked lovely in the sunset. We are 150 miles south of Saigon and are due at Formosa this day week. We live like rats in this hold, but we manage to keep alive[8]. God bless you.

Wednesday 19th May 1943
We are now anchored outside Saigon at the mouth of the river Mekong. There is beautiful country all around, but oh it is steamy. Alas I had a case of dysentery in my lads. The food is still rice and stew + tea. God bless you.

Thursday 20th May 1943
We are still anchored here at Saigon and it is hot! And I am sticky and dirty in this filthy freighter. I forgot to tell you of my hectic send off from Changi. Athel, Rawle, Tony, Freddie etc. all pushed me on a trailer to my sending off place. You would have laughed to see me perched at the wheel on top of my baggage like a King. It was heart breaking to leave such friends – and how I miss them. I love you.

Wash & shave at 3.30 a.m. on deck!

Friday 21st May 1943
My darling, still here waiting for convoy at the Mekong. Tonight we had fish heads stew! Last night we had a battle royal with flying cockroaches (huge things) and rats in the darkness. I love you more than ever. God bless you.

Saturday 22nd May 1943
A hot sweltering day spent here. We *may* move tomorrow. I spent the afternoon sitting around the deck reading Shakespeare (Merchant of Venice) – clad in bathing shorts alone! Had a long talk with Aussie adjutant (Carrick – a Catholic). It is 7 p.m. and I am in the "black hole" writing to you my darling. I work hard with the sick all evening. God bless you Eileen.

Sunday 23rd May 1943
We lifted anchor this evening and off we went with 20 ships steaming towards the land of the rising sun! God bless you.

Monday 24th May 1943
We are now allowed 20 minutes on deck each day. The decks are red hot (steel) and are a few inches above our heads in this hold. I have finished "Merchant of Venice" and I love you more and more. This awful life here is *nothing* to me because you are everything to me. God bless you.

Tuesday 25th May 1943
Awful experience last night of a rat crawling across my legs – the place was in an uproar. Still working hard, kept below, little to eat. Started "As You Like It"; could not continue with "I Dwell in High Places" (Marjorie Bowen). Your love keeps me alive. God bless you.

[8] Frank was in charge of the distribution of the cigarettes. Keith Mitchell (see Postscript) tells how Frank kept the fly population down by handing out one cigarette for every 10 dead flies; he would then ritually bury the dead flies at sea each day to prevent them being recycled.

Wednesday 26th May 1943
Still at sea heading for Formosa. Still very hot though we have an occasional shower of rain which is very welcome from washing point of view. We have poker every evening after roll call – I am winning too. Fr. O'Mahoney is feeling ill.

Thursday 27th May 1943
I have grand fun with the American sailors – they are terribly familiar but not cheeky. I am popular with them. We had more time on deck in the afternoon – I had two salt water bathes from the hose. God bless you.

Friday 28th May 1943
My darling, I am still on the China Sea and not exactly enjoying the cruise! However, it could be a lot worse. We are due at Formosa tomorrow afternoon morning. I have one serious case of stomach trouble and of course I have nil to treat him with. God bless you.

Saturday 29th May 1943
We docked in Takao this morning (Formosa) and we should be here for a couple of days at least. We have not been allowed on deck at all today – we had a Turkish Bath free! And now it is evening and I love you more now.

Sunday 30th May 1943
A very hot day spent in Takao harbour. It is a lovely spot and very beautiful. We had 3 bananas each today bought by ourselves! I was interviewed by Japanese medical Officers who have promised us some drugs – they were very nice about it. I love you.

Monday 31st May 1943
Another day at Takao – we left harbour in the morning but that was a false start and we were back again in the afternoon. Some drugs arrived. Cooler today. God bless you.

Tuesday 1st June 1943
What a lovely harbour this is with all its craft – junks, steamers, ferry boats etc. It's just like Portstewart. My darling, we *may* sail tomorrow – cheers! God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 2nd June 1943
We set sail from Takao early this morning – and it was a glorious morning with a fresh following breeze. We are due at Kobe in 6 days time. Thank heavens that will end my travels for a while. I love you more today. God bless you.

Thursday 3rd June 1943 (Ascension)
We are steaming up the East China Sea northward bound. It is becoming much colder thank God – what a relief after so many years of the tropical heat. I could never have loved or married anyone but you.

Friday 4th June 1943
It has rained all day and has been bitterly cold. I have stuck to my shorts only while everyone else is wrapped up in woollies. I have great fun with the American sailors – including a Swede, a Latvian, Russian etc. God bless you.

3 weeks at sea

Saturday 5th June 1943

My darling, you must have been praying hard for me today – a torpedo whizzed past our bow at 10 a.m. this morning[9]. Guns were firing and depth charges exploding while we waited in the hold for the worst. I do hope the submarine escaped – thank God we did. A miserable, wet cold day spent below deck, but much preferable to the heat. God bless you.

Sunday 6th June 1943

Another scare this morning – our siren went and the guns opened up on a so-called submarine but it turned out to be driftwood. We sighted south-west Japan in the afternoon. Now we are sailing among the islands northwards bound. God bless you.

Monday 7th June 1943

Arrived at Moji this morning; medically examined; disembarked in the afternoon on Japanese soil. Lined up and counted & recounted; by ferry across the Inland Sea; train at 9.30 after awful struggle with kit. Across country – we had 2nd class carriages packed but no standing.

Tuesday 8th June 1943

An awful night; no sleep; sitting bolt upright, sore neck. A day of marvels. We travelled through the industrial Kyoto and Kobe (Aussie left us), thence towards east coast, then back across Japan to west coast up hill down dale through beautiful country. Terraced paddy, forest clad mountains.

Wednesday 9th June 1943

Another dreadful night in the train – no sleep. We are now speeding along the west coast due north. It is lovely country, Eileen; you would love it. Thousands of tunnels en route. The simple peasants are grand people. Have seen hundreds of lovely coves today. God bless you darling.

Thursday 10th June 1943

Another weary day in the train and in the most northerly part of the island. Spent many hours in a school to reach which we had to parade through the town with crowds on either side of us laughing. At 5.30 p.m. we embarked on the ferry which brought us to the northern island in 4 hours. Hakodate. Marched for one hour and reach camp at midnight. At last thank God the end.

Friday 11th June 1943

A day spent with the sick. We rose at 5.30 a.m.; P.T., then roll call; spent the night on the floor. The horrors I have seen among the British troops (RAF) here cannot be described. Plenty of human skeletons. I still love you my Eileen. God bless you.

Saturday 12th June 1943

A terrific day's work – 5.30 a.m. till 9 p.m. – not a sit down all day but thank God I am doing something for these poor chaps. Food is good (one course); potatoes, rice, vegetable and fish (stew); lovely scenery. We are due to leave for another camp soon.

[9] The Wales Maru and the convoy were attacked by the US submarine USS Tinosa. Another ship in the convoy, the Tsushima Maru was hit by a torpedo from the Tinosa but it failed to explode; the Mark 14 torpedo was notoriously unreliable (80% failed) due to a design flaw and was finally replaced a few months later. See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mark_14_torpedo

Sunday 13th June 1943
Hakodate is a lovely place but this small compound is not so nice. How I wish I could do something with the many dying men here. God bless you for loving me.

Monday 14th June 1943
Horrible earth tremors by day and by night. A large volcano a few miles across the bay. I had such a wonderful dream of you darling last night. I can never love you enough, Eileen. A hot bath today; one man dead of T.B.; very busy but I love you.

Tuesday 15th June 1943
Oh my darling, this awful place must wear me out – so many sick, so many dying. I found one Catholic among them (Regan), gave him some advice. My Rosary was also in demand. We move up country tomorrow. God bless you.

Wednesday 16th June 1943
Up at 4.30 a.m. – parade; marched a mile through Hakodate to station. Lovely journey of 2 hours along coast around large volcano (Komatchka?)[10]. Arrived at new camp; Yakumo. Had to sit in field all day while carpenters converted this big stable into quarters! God bless you.

Thursday 17th June 1943
My darling I was wakened this morning by the cuckoo and the lark. Lovely mountainous and arable land around. Food is good. Compound small. Have joined Fr. O'Mahoney's crowd again thank God. Many sick today – one pneumonia. I love you, Eileen my darling.

Friday 18th June 1943
Oh my darling, what a day from 5 a.m. till 9 p.m.; then I fell upon my bed as the rain poured through the holes in the roof and walls of this stable. The cold is intense and we have no warm clothing. Still I offer it all up to Him. God bless you.

Saturday 19th June 1943
Rained hard the whole day long. Our stable is now a quagmire. Was inspected by high Japanese officials who said it was not even fit [for] P.O.W.s! No work for men meant all work for me.

Sunday 20th June 1943
No Mass. Cold, wet and miserable. Still working hard. Two pneumonias being nursed in this stable; no medicine; Japanese refused to send men to hospital – they must just die here. They gave ¼ cup of milk today to 5 patients! Eileen my darling I *may* be writing a postcard to you soon.

Monday 21st June 1943
My darling, another cold, wet day. Still many sick in camp. Had a long chat with Japanese commander about food and vitamins. He was an analytical chemist. God bless you.

Tuesday 22nd June 1943
The sun came out for a bit today and warmed us up a bit but very cold this evening. Milk issue for the sick today – beautiful thick fresh stuff. Fr. O'Mahoney is trying hard to have Mass for Corpus Christi. God bless you.

[10] This is probably Tomaga-take.

Wednesday 23rd June 1943
Inspected today by Japanese colonel. Two of the men are seriously ill and I have nothing to treat them with. Today we are having bathroom built, also cookhouse. I am still very cold in this land of the rising sun. God bless you.

Thursday 24th June 1943 (Corpus Christi)
My darling, I am weary to death – I now get up at 4.45 a.m. and finish about 9 p.m. Fr. O'Mahoney is saying Mass this evening thank God. I must steal the patients' time and go. I have a patient very ill with septicaemia. God bless you.

Friday 25th June 1943
It was wonderful having Mass again but no Communion available owing to rush. We may have Mass and Communion on Sunday. Another terrific day. God bless you.

Saturday 26th June 1943
Another mad rush of work with no time to eat or sleep. I still have time to think of you and pray for you. Your exams must be over soon and then holidays.

Sunday 27th June 1943
Mass and Communion thank God. Had a little time today but not much. It becomes colder instead of warmer. Oh when does summer come! I have three dysentery cases but they are doing well thank God. My darling, *when* will this war be over?

Monday 28th June 1943
Work, work, and more work from morn till night. The time just passes like a flash. I cannot catch up with myself & Japanese nursing orderly is of great help to me in this place. Provides all kinds of drugs & dressings; milk & food for patients etc. God bless you.

Tuesday 29th June 1943
My darling, this has been my worst day yet. Pneumonias and dysenteries abound now. Sam came up today. I have cold meals always and also diarrhoea. Millions of flies! No covers on open trench latrines. Still I do my best – to love you more. God bless you.

Wednesday 30th June 1943
Bed at 11 p.m. last night – up at 4.30 a.m.! Oh what a life. Most of the work is clerical and medical and sanitary. Had a walk to the local dairy today with medical orderly to fetch milk. The dairymaids were ogling at *me*. Jealous?

Thursday 1st July 1943
My hospital is well established now and all my patients doing well thank God. I have organised things at last and am happy in my work. God bless you.

Friday 2nd July 1943
Another daily visit to the dairy and there met a very pretty, shy office girl. My guide made her blush! It is grand to get out in the fields among the potatoes, clover, and lovely cattle and horses. The weather is glorious here by the sea and yet in the country. God bless you.

Saturday 3rd July 1943
A hectic day which ended with a case of acute appendicitis (American Navy man). The Japanese wanted an operation immediately but I refused. I had to make a complete report on the Army Medical organisation for the Japanese officer (Mr Kudo). God bless you.

Sunday 4th July 1943
Fr. O'Mahoney has bad stomach trouble and so we had no Mass today. I said the Rosary, Litany of Sacred Heart, and Act of Contrition for the men. I had my crucifix and statue on the table. I did not forget you a moment today. Paddy washed all my clothes, God bless him. Appendicitis case better. God bless you.

Monday 5th July 1943
A quieter day thank heavens. A diphtheria case today. Japanese produced serum in very short time. I think it will be alright. God bless you.

Tuesday 6th July 1943
Things are settling down at last and my work is organised – hospital, morning and evening sick etc. All are doing well thank God. I had some cigarettes as presents and gave them to Paddy. Now get to bed at 8 p.m. and get up at 5 a.m. God bless you.

Wednesday 7th July 1943
You should see my cherry bowl pipe given me by Mr Elkin. The Japanese medical orderly is leaving tomorrow and I am sorry. He has been more than good to us all here. He has taken my autograph, my address & my wife's name (Eileen Murray!). I am on milk diet by order.

Thursday 8th July 1943
How do you like your new name, my darling? I expect you are now enjoying Killough or Portstewart and preparing for Lough Derg again. God bless you.

Friday 9th July 1943
We saw Geisha girls dancing in the camp (Korean) across the road this evening. They sang weird songs too. Their hair and dress were lovely. A very busy day. My darling I am not so happy in this place. There is no Athel, no Knox etc. God bless you.

Saturday 10th July 1943
A party last night with the Japanese. It was quaint sitting at the very low table in sock soles sipping wine and smoking while a Japanese visitor expounded his theories on the war (in Japanese). A hectic day; another diphtheria case. God bless you darling.

Sunday 11th July 1943
My darling, we had Mass but no Communion this evening. Oh what a relief and consolation after a very trying week. I have had another hard day but managed a wash! No soap to be bought anywhere – no money anyhow. God bless you.

Monday 12th July 1943
The glorious 12th was a sad day – the Japanese now decide which men go out to work; not *I*. Sick men are now being driven out to work and they can scarcely walk. Bed at 10 p.m. last night and up at 4.30 a.m. God bless you.

Tuesday 13th July 1943
Rained all day. No work for men and little for me. I love you more and more with each day we are parted. We shall not be parted much longer. God bless you.

[drawing of rose] C.O. using bed as urinal

Wednesday 14th July 1943
Things are much easier nowadays for me. I am longing for the day of my release from here. God bless you my darling.

Thursday 15th July 1943
An inspection by the Colonel today. He was very pleased with the hospital. Had a party with the officers tonight in the office. Much Japanese rice wine was consumed and I sang for the company. I did enjoy myself. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 16th July 1943
A quiet day reading "Volcano" by Cecil Roberts. Cigarettes, soap, papers, and flour arrived today. You should see the lovely rosette which adorns the wall of our latrine at nose level! Sorry to mention it. My darling I love you with all my heart & soul.

Saturday 17th July 1943
A glorious day of sunshine and I am feeling happier and more contented than ever before. Tomorrow is a holiday and we have been promised a swim in the sea. Many more drugs today – Vit. B, sulphonamides, digitalis. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 18th July 1943
A wonderful "yasume" day included Mass, Communion, a swim in the sea, a concert, sunshine, and a glorious sunset. I did not forget you for a moment and wanted you to share it with me so very much. God bless you.

Monday 19th July 1943
Another glorious day of sunshine. Am reading "Ann Vickers" by Sinclair Lewis (American) – a grand story. We have a wireless set now and get local music. Large bear captured a few yards from here during the week. Hot bath tonight. God bless you.

Tuesday 20th July 1943
Some digging and picking this morning. A busy day – bought ¥130 of drugs for men. I sang Mountains of Mourne & Rose of Tralee at the men's concert on Sunday! God bless you.

Wednesday 21st July 1943
We bought lots of drugs today for the hospital. Had a party last night. Japanese medical orderly gave me pictures of the Ainu of this island (Hokkaido). God bless you.

Thursday 22nd July 1943
A quiet day with some rain. Men had ½ day. God bless you.

Friday 23rd July 1943
It has rained all the day and so the men had a yasume today and lay in bed the day long. I had little to do. Fr. O'Mahoney's face (impetigo) improves daily. God bless you.

Saturday 24th July 1943
Had a fairly busy day. I do hope you are having a grand holiday at Killough or Portstewart. Won't it be wonderful when we have our first holiday together when I get back home. God bless you.

Sunday 25th July 1943
A cold day with a hot bath this evening. Another tooth extraction yesterday. I must start a dental practice when I go back home! No Mass today unfortunately as Fr. O'Mahoney is not very fit yet. I have been promised "The Road to Nowhere" and Fr. Brown stories. God bless you.

Monday 26th July 1943
My darling, I have been starving all day to cure my squitters. My gallant Paddy won a loaf today for hard work and gave it to me! He would not take "no" for an answer. I always give him two packets of cigarettes weekly. I am paying for his denture repairs.

Tuesday 27th July 1943
A quiet day. I did some washing today – shirt and shorts. Glorious weather again; the hills look grand. I was invited out to lunch at the Mess of the other company. Salad! I was the first to be invited from this side. God bless you.

Wednesday 28th July 1943
A restful day – even managed a sunbath in the afternoon in the garden. God bless you.

Thursday 29th July 1943
Eileen, my darling, I had a wonderful dream about you last night. Oh we were so happy together on our way home. I told you my tale of the war and torpedoes etc. God bless you.

Friday 30th July 1943
Nothing exciting today except the rain – and it came down in torrents. Paddy is sick today and I am taking good care of him. God bless you.

Saturday 31st July 1943
My darling, I am on top of the world today ([illegible]). The sun is shining and the summer is here(?). God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 1st August 1943 (Yasume)
Confession, Mass, and Communion this morning thank God – and it has made me so very happy. A glorious day of sunshine. A swim in the afternoon. An American and I (Zander) swam out to a launch about a mile from the shore – it was grand. We were acclaimed by the Japanese as marvellous swimmers. We were in Volcano Bay with lots of volcanoes studded around the wonderful sweep of coast. A concert in the evening – I sang "Molly Malone". God bless you.

Monday 2nd August 1943
Another day of sunshine. Bought ¥150 drugs for men today. I feel much fitter nowadays and I pray God grant me health to endure it to the end and bring me home safely to you, Eileen. God bless you.

Tuesday 3rd August 1943
Sunshine all the day and "The Road to Nowhere" finished. Still reading Fr. Brown "Murder Train" (Paddy's). A wonderful hay scene in the field beside me – 50 men and women have been stacking hay all day. Their broad straw hats give them a Mexican touch. The lofty mountains in the background make it a perfect setting for a picture. God bless you.

Wednesday 4th August 1943
I had a wonderful swim last evening in the sea with skin patients. I can manage it every day I hope. There was Volcano Bay bathed in sunshine, volcanoes all around – 50 miles away; quaint fishing boats and people on the beach. We had cakes and bread today! God bless you.

Thursday 5th August 1943
Summer really has come and we are bathing in it. Not much work nowadays and nobody seriously ill thank God. God bless you.

Friday 6th August 1943
We have a wireless session each evening at the office. We all sit around on boxes and smoke our corn cob pipes and talk of old times. I was presented to a General (POW Japan) today. God bless you.

Saturday 7th August 1943
My darling, the sun still shines and I am fairly happy and fit. God bless you.

Sunday 8th August 1943
No Mass or Communion today. Men came back too late. A day of sunshine. My darling, there was an air raid alarm last night! God bless you.

Monday 9th August 1943
A nightmare of a day which included disinfection of all barrack rooms and inoculating 400 men against diphtheria. I still have time to love and adore you with my heart and soul. One of my patients today is an Omagh man!

Tuesday 10th August 1943
My darling, another busy day. We were presented with a fan each today! Medical orderly gave me a wonderful Japanese pipe – 1 ½ feet long! It will be a marvellous souvenir. I have so many things to tell you about my Eastern adventures.

Wednesday 11th August 1943
An uneventful day as a POW. The men had a half day owing to rain. I had a swim in the sea with the skin cases. Many Japanese children came to watch *me* swim.

Thursday 12th August 1943
The ache and the longing that is ever at my heart to see you just once again or even to have a letter from you, Eileen. We bought many drugs today from the village. I love you. God bless you.

Friday 13th August 1943
Nothing exciting today. I read your letters through for the thousandth time. God bless you.

Saturday 14th August 1943
Another day of sunshine which ended with a swim in the Pacific. I have done some washing today and darning too – in fact I gave darning lessons! I shall be only too willing to give you lessons too. God bless you.

Sunday 15th August 1943 Yasume (The Assumption)
Mass and Holy Communion; blue skies (Mary's Blue), a hot sun, a gentle breeze, a swim, you in my heart, fish and bread for supper – made this a perfect day. Zander and I swam out to our white launch – a mile out. The Japanese were amazed. God bless you.

Monday 16th August 1943
My darling, back to work again. Your school results should be out now and I am praying that you have your usual 100% passes. It is hard to pray in a P.O.W. camp – never a moment to one's self. God bless you Eileen.

Tuesday 17th August 1943
My darling, another day nearer to you. We had a weight throwing contest with the Japanese today and I beat them all – and I a skeleton of my former self. God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 18th August 1943
I darned several pairs of socks, with you by my side in our quiet little garden overlooking the hayfield. Pork and biscuits today! More work than usual. I did a post mortem on a pig for the camp commandant. Practised putting the shot.

Thursday 19th August 1943
Another busy day with a brief rest in my garden of Allah! I had a blitz on the hospital today and cleaned it up. Wonderful news today – I shall be sending you a postcard tomorrow and pray God it reaches you safely. God bless you darling.

Friday 20th August 1943
I sent off your postcard today (180 words!) – mine was a masterpiece of economy. More biscuits today. The hospital is now well organised and very neat. I attend all meals and make all visits personally. God bless you.

Saturday 21st August 1943
Glorious news about Europe in Nippon Times – Sicily nearly finished; Mussolini kicked out, Russians advancing, Americans doing well in Pacific and China. I'll soon be home to you darling. Won't it be wonderful when peace comes again and we are together. I am living for that day to come. God bless you.

Sunday 22nd August 1943
No Mass today as the men are all out working. We only have it on alternate Sundays nowadays. I am starving today for my diarrhoea. Dysentery is appearing in the camp. God bless you.

Monday 23rd August 1943
My darling, we are still in our stable, still sleeping on the ground, still no tables or chairs. Food has improved and we have new potatoes for every meal. Food has a *big* say in a P.O.W. camp! My patients are doing well – have 32 now. God bless you.

Tuesday 24th August 1943
I now dish out the food to the patients from a bucket and they get more than the orderlies and myself. Sunshine all day. God bless you.

Wednesday 25th August 1943
I have glorious afternoons in the sun nowadays. I have the garden and the scenery all to myself and I never miss a moment. I have stopped smoking my pipe now and feel much better for it. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 26th August 1943
A quiet day in the sun reading. How I hope and pray that my cards reach you soon. I do not want you to worry about me Eileen. I want you to be happy always whether I am with you or not. I have been dreaming of a long holiday or honeymoon for us both at Bundoran when I reach home again. God bless you.

Friday 27th August 1943
Another day in the sun – I am quite tanned now. Bread today! Two patients very ill; no treatment for them. My darling, your poor holidays will soon be ending – maybe you start work on Wednesday next. God bless you.

Saturday 28th August 1943
My darling, I am in better health and spirits now than ever before as a P.O.W. thank God. The food is very much better nowadays. I am still sunbathing and day-dreaming of you and our future together. God bless you.

Sunday 29th August 1943 (Yasume day)
My darling, Mass and Communion this morning – all for you and for peace. A marvellous swim in the afternoon, the waves were terrific, but I loved it all the more. Paddy said it reminded him of Ballybunion and I thought it like Bundoran. God bless you.

Monday 30th August 1943
We had a concert last evening; Sgt. Collier sang "Phil The Fluter's Ball" and had the Japanese guards almost dancing to it. God bless you.

Tuesday 31st August 1943
A dull day with some rain and no excitement. My serious patients are doing well thank God. May He bless you darling.

Wednesday 1st September 1943
Another day of sunshine in the garden with you and my dreams of Belfast and Dublin and where we shall go together when I reach home again. God bless you.

Thursday 2nd September 1943 (Anne's Birthday)
Another day of sunshine and no excitement. The hospital has improved above all knowing. All patients have wooden sandals now, two decent commodes etc. Our bathday; baking tonight; fresh fish last night and tonight! Becoming cold again. Paddy spoiling me. God bless you.

Friday 3rd September 1943
A cold wet weary day for me. Very weak with diarrhoea, but there are many *much* worse than I. God bless you Eileen.

Saturday 4th September 1943
My darling I worship you today. God bless you.

Sunday 5th September 1943 (Yasume)
Mass, Communion, Rosary, swimming, concert, good dinner and bed! That is a summary of another happy day. I had a present today of a lovely pair of gauntlets for the winter. God bless you.

Monday 6th September 1943
Not much change today except that I love you more. May He bless you.

Tuesday 7th September 1943
Flies (millions) all day and mosquitoes all night; diarrhoea day and night; tottering on the legs! Isn't life grand? Not much work nowadays. God bless you.

Wednesday 8th September 1943
It has rained all day and we have spent it indoors. The flies were terrible. I killed 50 in about 2 minutes! God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 9th September 1943
My darling, I had an *apple* today as a present! God bless you Eileen.

Friday 10th September 1943
Another day nearer to you my darling. Nothing exciting today except bread for dinner + fish! My tummy still rumbles away but I feel alright. I am reading "A Year of my Life" by A.G. Street – a famous diary. Some delightful photographs in it of rural England. God bless you Eileen.

Saturday 11th September 1943
My darling, what a miserable day of driving rain and cold. Of course it rained in on my things too to make matters worse. I wonder each day at different times what you are doing in far off Omagh. God bless you.

Sunday 12th September 1943
Had a rotten day but feel better this evening. Nothing exciting to tell you. God bless you.

Monday 13th September 1943
Nothing much happening – except pork for dinner tonight – in small quantities! I am happy these days though I feel bad! You are my all.

Tuesday 14th September 1943
My darling, oh what a future of happiness we have ahead of us when we become united again. A quiet day with bread at night and diarrhoea worse. How I long to be fit again, but God's will be done.

Wednesday 15th September 1943
My darling, I am fasting today + salts to try my cure again. Of course there *would* be meat for lunch and mackerel for supper! But I don't mind much. The men are worried about me and offer me all sorts of dainties to build me up again. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 16th September 1943
My darling, I am feeling much better today. My tummy feels grand and my sunbathing continues apace. All my patients are doing well. God bless you.

Friday 17th September 1943
Eileen aroon my darling, I am feeling well again and oh what a difference it makes to life in a POW camp. Japanese officer told us that 5 POW ships had been sunk in the past week – and your Frank is still alive. God bless you.

Saturday 18th September 1943
Another glorious day and dreams of you my darling. When are you going to write to me? I fear all your letters are going to Tokyo and then back to Malaya. I still adore you.

Sunday 19th September 1943
No holiday; no Mass but plenty of work. It was a cheerless day. I could not love you too much.

Monday 20th September 1943
The Japanese doctor came from Hakodate today – a new chap – and promised to send us lots of drugs. He had verbal messages from officers and men at Hakodate for *me* and none for anyone else here. I felt so pleased that someone remembers me besides you, my darling. God bless you.

Tuesday 21st September 1943
A cold miserable day. This camp is ideal when the Sun is shining but alas it is awful when rain and cold are rampant. The food remains good, however. There is talk about moving to a new camp at the end of next month.

Wednesday 22nd September 1943
Winter has come and here I am with my light shirt and shorts! Frozen stiff in bed last night. God bless you Eileen.

Thursday 23rd September 1943
A terrible day of cold and rain. The men have to work through it all drenched to the skin – some of them have no boots. My heart bleeds for them. God bless you.

Friday 24th September 1943
Another rotten day. Have been reading "The Enemy" a *story* of the last war. Haven't much work to do these days but there will be a big crop of illness very soon. God bless you.

Saturday 25th September 1943
Still very cold and still I love you. The cold has come to stay. What it will be like in midwinter I hate to think. A holiday tomorrow thank God for the men. The camp officers have been promised a bear-hunting expedition in the hills! Here's hoping. God bless you.

Sunday 26th September 1943 (Yasume)
Confession, Mass, Communion in the open air but it was cold. Marvellous 8 mile walk in the hills with Maloney, Wynd[11], the Japanese officer (Kudo), and 4 Japanese guards. It was a foretaste of freedom. There were Irish glens and running brooks. There were delightful little farms, larch woods, silver birch, ferns, and a marvellous of Volcano Bay. We gathered wild grapes – *I* had great fun away up in the vine. No bears available. Pleasantly tired. Rice and watery stew. God bless you.

[11] This is Oswald Wynd, the author. See Postscript.

Monday 27th September 1943
A sunny day with glorious thoughts of you my darling, and of our reunion in the near future. God bless you.

Tuesday 28th September 1943
It rained all day and the men had a half day. The aerodrome will take three years to finish – the war should be over by that time! All my patients are doing well thank God – it is a miracle really. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 29th September 1943
Another day of dreaming of you. Surely our big day will come soon. I have been learning the words of "The West's Asleep", "Biddy Mulligan", "Father O'Flynn", "O'Donnell Alu"! Imagine such a thing in a Japanese Prisoner of War camp! A little sun today. How are things at school today? God bless you.

Thursday 30th September 1943
Had a quiet afternoon in the sunshine with you my darling. Eileen, you should see my new winter jacket made from blanket, brass buttons etc. Paddy gave me half a blanket and a patient sewed it up. God bless you.

Friday 1st October 1943
A real summer's day and two planes landed on the runway of the aerodrome. I am very fit these days, darling, and am putting on weight. God bless you.

Saturday 2nd October 1943
I am glad now that I came to Japan instead of going up to Thailand jungle. Accommodation is not ideal here but at least they are bearable. God bless you and your love.

Sunday 3rd October 1943
Yasume today – rain, cold, sleet. The men all retired under the blankets. Extracted a tooth successfully. No Mass today on account of the weather. Paddy is a gem and still spoils me with comforts and books. I know not where they come from! God bless you my darling.

Monday 4th October 1943
A quiet day but still cold. My new jacket is finished – beautiful buttons (Royal Artillery), two pockets, epaulettes etc., double breast. You will be jealous of it. It is No.1 jacket in camp. God bless you.

Tuesday 5th October 1943
My darling, another glorious day of Japan's late summer. Man broke his arm today and I had to set it and put on improvised splints. God bless you.

Wednesday 6th October 1943
A most dreadful night of cold. I haven't warmed up yet in spite of my new jacket. Still it is good to be alive. God bless you.

Thursday 7th October 1943
We now have sugar *and* milk for hospital patients. The Q.M. came from Hakodate yesterday and ordered it. An Indian summer's day! God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 8th October 1943
Oh my darling if only you could share my dreams by day and night you would not be too unhappy. You are ever with me in these dreams and every moment too. I live only for you, for God, and my country. The Japanese guards *salute me* nowadays! Nothing exciting today. God bless you.

Saturday 9th October 1943
Another quiet day; am in good spirits and in better health. Food is good – lots of fish because we live by the sea; lots of potatoes, barley and vegetables, but no bread. Have been promised barley porridge tomorrow morning. God bless you.

Sunday 10th October 1943
No Mass today because no holiday. I feel quite happy and fit these days and oh my darling it is all due to you. God bless you.

Monday 11th October 1943
My darling, another glorious day with you in the garden – blue skies and hot sun. There are rumours of us leaving here on 25th or 26th. The new camp is still doubtful, but we are all moving together thank God – that means Mass occasionally (and that is everything). God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 12th October 1943
A glorious day munching sweets and dreaming of you. God bless you.

Wednesday 13th October 1943
Third anniversary of mother's death (R.I.P.). I still cannot believe that she will not be on the doorsteps of Beechwood to welcome me home. More apples and sweets today! We are being spoiled, Eileen – we have little to complain of. God bless you.

Thursday 14th October 1943
Hakodate doctor came today; we inoculated all troops against dysentery. Then he took me for a trip on the motor cycle with S/M Dranai. It was grand fun speeding along. We saw the men at work. Many drugs came – also rubber shoes for bootless men. God bless you.

Friday 15th October 1943
Biscuits today and I love you more. God bless you.

Saturday 16th October 1943
I had a wonderful dream of you last night, my darling. We shall be the happiest couple in the world. God bless you.

Sunday 17th October 1943
Mass and Communion this morning for you, my darling. We have open air mass but it was cold and wet today – our yasume. Rained most of the day and so we had a miserable time sitting on the stable floor and eating like animals. I still love you Eileen. God bless you.

Monday 18th October 1943
We had a half day on account of rain. More cold and misery. How horrible sitting on the floor eating dinner in the darkness of this stable! I shall be able to appreciate food and ordinary comfort when this is all over. God bless you.

Tuesday 19th October 1943
Winter is coming. It seems that it snows here from November till April – oh! what a prospect. We move to our new camp on the 25th of this month. God bless you.

Wednesday 20th October 1943
Another day nearer thank God. My paralysed case walked today. All is well. God bless you.

Thursday 21st October 1943
Almost frozen in bed last night with cold – never felt so cold in all my life. *And* winter has not come yet. I did not thaw till the afternoon. Nothing exciting today. Am looking forward to our next camp and settling down for winter. God bless you.

Friday 22nd October 1943
A bitterly cold day. My patients all doing well, though I have no means of diagnosing many of them. I have to rely solely on my hands, eyes, ears, and touch. No X rays, no urine or stool tests, no dentist – no anything. We move on Monday next to Muroran. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 23rd October 1943
My darling, the temperature was 40°F today – coldest yet. We are to have warm clothing issued at our next camp. My hospital is almost empty now, getting ready to move on Monday. Thank heavens we shall have more comfort at next station. I love you more today, my Eileen.

Sunday 24th October 1943
No Mass today. Everyone packing for the journey tomorrow afternoon. Have to hide my letters due to search at next camp. God bless you.

Monday 25th October 1943
The big move to Muroran has been completed and we are duly installed. It is a model POW camp with every convenience. I am sharing a cosy room with Capt. Maloney – electric light, a *bed*, cosy; better food. The hospital looks very good. Things are looking up. God bless you.

Tuesday 26th October 1943
A busy day sorting out the patients and the hospital. There are 350 Dutch and 370 of us here – they have six officers and we have 19. Hot water bottles tonight for Maloney and me. Much colder. Men start work tomorrow. Rest of my kit is due tomorrow. God bless you.

Wednesday 27th October 1943
Things have settled down at last. I am O.C. hospital as I am senior to the Dutch doctor; my 3 sergeants are installed in the hospital. Tea, sugar, sweets, matches etc. bought today! Good meals continue – cheers. Commandant very pleased with hospital. God bless you.

Thursday 28th October 1943
My darling, a very full day's work and I am off to bed *and* my hot water bottle satisfied with life. If things continue as they are in this camp the time will soon pass and we shall be together again. God bless you.

Friday 29th October 1943
I have sorted things out here at last and the hospital is running smoothly. I am the only one of the 19 British and 6 Dutch officers that is doing anything here. Thank God I have a job to do. May He bless you.

Saturday 30th October 1943
My darling, things are going well and I am satisfied with life. I may not want to leave here when peace comes! My quarters are much more comfortable than my Malayan ones in peacetime. My sarong has made lovely curtains! My pictures adorn the walls. God bless you.

Sunday 31st October 1943
I had a terrible disappointment today. Mass was due at 9 a.m. but did not begin till 9.50 a.m.; I had to rush off to sick parade at 9.55 a.m. and so missed Mass. I could have wept with fury. It was a yasume day and we had bread for tiffin. Not much work. Japanese doctor inspected hospital.

Monday 1st November 1943
I am now reading Mat Mulcaghey's "Aghnascreeby" – from the Japanese camp library! It's all about Tyrone and it has brought me back home again to you Eileen. Canteen day – sugar, soap, bread, biscuits and lemonade! Our food is really good nowadays. Many men sick unfortunately. God bless you.

Tuesday 2nd November 1943 (All Souls' Day)
Cold and wet for the men working. We have a bath every three days. Get up at 5.30 a.m.; P.T. and roll call at 6 a.m.; hospital food; breakfast; hospital rounds at 8 a.m.; wash; dressings at 10 a.m.; hospital lunch and my own at 11.30; reading; dressings at 5 p.m.; hospital supper and mine at 5.30 p.m.; sick parade 6.30; roll call 8 p.m.; bed. God bless you.

Wednesday 3rd November 1943
Newspapers today – things are going well with us. Have finished "Aghnascreeby". Inspected by Hakodate Colonel. Concert in hospital at night. God bless you.

Thursday 4th November 1943
Inspected by a Major General this morning. He seemed pleased. My darling, I dreamt that we were in an air raid together at home, but I treated it all as funny being so used to air raids! I was relieved to find it a dream. God bless you, Eileen alannah.

Friday 5th November 1943
I shall be allowed to send you a postcard tomorrow; I should be sending one each month from now on. If only I could have another letter from you, my darling. Capt. Maloney thinks you resemble me very much! Your snap is on my table at my bedside. God bless you.

Saturday 6th November 1943
Cold and wet today, but we have means of keeping warm day and night. There is a good stove in the hospital; the patients are well fed. I am making a lampshade today and your postcard has been written. I shall always love you, my darling. God bless you.

Sunday 7th November 1943
My darling, snow today and oh it was cold! We are going to have a real old-fashioned Christmas alright. Sent Gerry a card today. Nothing exciting today but still plenty of work. No Mass today as it is not a holiday. God bless you.

Monday 8th November 1943
Canteen today – sugar, biscuits, and cigarettes! Sun shining today but still very cold. The Java troops feel the cold much worse than we. My darling, I'll soon be home again to you and happiness. I know it must come soon. God bless you and yours.

Tuesday 9th November 1943
Rain came today and things were warmer. Two stoves for officers (25) installed. No canteen or cigarettes for the men since we came here. They miss their smokes. More blankets and warm underclothes today; 5 thick and 1 thin blanket each. I am longing for news of you Eileen and our dear ones. God bless you.

Wednesday 10th November 1943
I had my most wonderful dream of you last night Eileen. I spent my night in and around the Falls Road with you. We were at your shop in Leeson Street; Felix was there too – also your Josephine and mine (R.I.P.). I was in my blanket jacket and cap; we went to an O'Connell meeting. We had a tram ride together and oh I was so proud of you. God bless you.

Thursday 11th November 1943
Big advances in the hospital – we have stoves going, hot water, doings etc. We get the full blast of the Siberian wind here and oh it is cold. Snow this evening! Some winter clothing today but it doesn't fit me. The men have hard work to do and are always hungry. We have a microscope now! God bless you.

Friday 12th November 1943
It has snowed all day and the west wind was howling. I pay about 8 visits daily to the hospital and so I get the benefit of the cold while the other officers are in bed! I am being acclimatised for home next winter please God! I am praying for health to do my job till the end. God bless you.

Saturday 13th November 1943
Much snow on the ground as we paraded for roll call this morning at 6 a.m. (dawn) and oh it was cold. The stoves were lit last night but I had no time to get near them. God bless you.

Sunday 14th November 1943
Mass and Communion this morning thank God – and all my prayers were for you Eileen. One of the men died suddenly yesterday and it depressed me. *Real* porridge this morning + sugar. Quite a busy day – Yasume Concert in hospital. God bless you.

Monday 15th November 1943
The Swedish Consul came from Hakodate today and inspected the camp and the hospital. I had quite a chat with him (in English) about the health of the men. He was the first civilised European civilian I had seen for ages. Canteen today – biscuits, cigarettes, and sugar + 3 apples! God bless you.

Tuesday 16th November 1943

We have two cases of chickenpox in hospital, and it is causing quite a scare in camp. Not an exciting day. The snow has gone and the sun shines again thank God. Pleasant day dreams of you. I did some darning in the afternoon – oh how I need a good wife! Would you marry me? God bless you.

Wednesday 17th November 1943

A quiet day. Weather much milder now and no snow. Read all about DeValera ("Inside Europe") in bed last night – hot water bottle at my feet, pipe in mouth, shaded electric lamp at my bedside, and you on my table! I am being spoiled here. God bless you.

Thursday 18th November 1943

Snow today but I have become acclimatised by this time. I keep away from stoves as much as possible. Father O'Mahoney has now got permission to have a small chapel and the Blessed Sacrament will be reserved there always. It is wonderful news – but more wonderful is that he will have Mass three or four times a week and *I* am the only one allowed to be present – no troops allowed (by order). Oh my darling think of the joy that almost daily Mass will bring to me and you. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 19th November 1943

Capt. Maloney made porridge yesterday and today – oh what a feast we had with it and sugar. We had 3 loaves of white bread each – we eat too much as prisoners. We had rabbit stew for lunch! It snowed the whole day through and I dreamt of you. God bless you.

Saturday 20th November 1943

Another loaf today – so we had toast and sugar with tea after lunch (grilled mackerel (2), potatoes (3), and onion stew)! Still snowing but not so pleasant; it is thawing a bit. One of my patients is recovering miraculously since his First Communion! God bless you Eileen.

Sunday 21st November 1943

My darling, I had Mass and Communion today all to myself in a very small room at 6.30 a.m.! Oh what happiness it has brought to me today. God bless you.

Monday 22nd November 1943

An elderly Dutch officer Capt. Meys was struck today and his nose bled. We protested to the commandant. Lt. Smith was struck yesterday on roll call. Canteen today biscuits, matches, sugar. No cigarettes. Oh my darling, I am almost weary of waiting but it will end soon. God bless you.

Tuesday 23rd November 1943

My old friend, diarrhoea, is back again and I feel rotten. What I need is a good wife (like you, Eileen!) to nurse me. Bitterly cold today but we are used to it now. All patients are doing well thank God. Have you still got your black frock (divorcee suit too)? God bless you.

Wednesday 24th November 1943

I have been trying to picture things today as they are at home compared with here. We have sugar every day and lots of biscuits, tea, cigarettes, and soap! Nothing exciting today. No snow. I am to have some Christmas cards made! I love you. God bless you.

Thursday 25th November 1943 (Charlie's 12th Anniversary R.I.P.)
I was weighed today and am 81kg – gained 13kg since Yakumo days! Heaviest officer in camp! Porridge and sugar in bed! God bless you.

Friday 26th November 1943
I had a day dream today of our future home and I had some taste of the happiness we would have together, Eileen. Oh how wonderful it will all be for us. We were paid today (¥50) – more than last camp. Big camp anniversary holiday on December 1st. God bless you.

Saturday 27th November 1943
My first pneumonia of the winter was admitted to hospital today. Things are going well there but many unfit have to go out working in the cold. My heart is broken at times with all this waiting. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 28th November 1943
Mass and Communion this morning all for you, my darling, and it has made me so very, very happy. I had a strange heart irregularity this evening but nothing to worry about. No holiday today. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 29th November 1943
Snowed all day – 30° (2 below zero!). We had to shovel coal for ½ hour in the afternoon; it was grand fun. Fr. O'Mahoney had a concert today. Canteen – sugar, salt, cakes, biscuits, cigarettes, polish! A grateful patient, Burger, gave me a packet of tobacco. God bless you.

Tuesday 30th November 1943
We had a marvellous time shovelling coal in the snow – not to mention a good round of snowballs! I turned out in white gloves, navy blue pullover, yellow scarf, cap, boots, garters and battle trousers! I felt so very fit Eileen and happy. Two patients very ill tonight. God bless you.

Wednesday 1st December 1943
A very sad day for me – my two patients died this morning. They said for a long time that they *wanted* to die – I knew they would not last the severe winter. This was the first anniversary of the camp – everyone had presentations; special meals and saki. We had 6 loaves each. Alas there was no Mass today. The concert was a big success and the Japanese officer howled at Phil the Fluter. God bless you.

Thursday 2nd December 1943 (4 years a soldier!)
Oh what a glorious dream I had of you, my darling last night. We were so very happy together going off to a hurling match. My usual disappointment on waking to reality and 2° below freezing! Snow all day and awful cold. Very busy nowadays. Many sick. God bless you.

Friday 3rd December 1943
Another dream of you last night, my Eileen. We had arranged to meet on Saturday at 2.30 p.m.! God bless you always. Intensely cold and snowing. Icicles on sheet this morning.

Saturday 4th December 1943 (My 31st Birthday)
My darling, I am growing old! A very uneventful birthday – nothing happened. I had no presents and no letter. I would have given anything for a letter from you Eileen. It seems that Red Cross supplies are due in 5 day's time. Letters arrived but none for us. God bless you.

Sunday 5th December 1943
Mass and Communion this morning, thank God and oh what happiness and consolation they brought me. Another pneumonia today. Still snowing hard and very cold but I like it now. Have a rotten throat and cold. God bless you.

Monday 6th December 1943
Canteen day – sugar, salt, apples, biscuits, cigarettes, paper! We are living like lords. The snow is melting a bit but my heart is melting too. Oh my darling we have a precious treasure – our love – which is so very priceless to us. I shall always love you. God bless you.

Tuesday 7th December 1943
Japanese doctor came today from Hakodate and examined the men sick. Wanted to send most of the men out to work. Rained all day and so no coal fatigue as yesterday. Very little Red Cross medical supplies are coming. I *still* love you. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 8th December 1943
How lucky I was to have Mass and Communion this morning for Mary's great feast day. There was a blitz on the sick this morning by the Japanese doctor. Shovelling coal this afternoon – not good for my back! Have finished reading "Royal Regiment" by Frankau. God bless you Eileen.

Thursday 9th December 1943
My darling, I sent you a card last night. Some Red Cross parcels and food came today – very little and not issued. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 10th December 1943
Temperature is well below zero nowadays with heaps of snow! Another pneumonia case today. We all congregate in our small sitting room around the stove and read, smoke, and chat every day. But most of my time is spent at the hospital. God bless you.

Saturday 11th December 1943
Three loaves each today! You would like the rabbits and the pigs here – how they must feel the cold. Below zero again. God bless you.

Sunday 12th December 1943
Mass and Communion this morning for you, Eileen. I was the only one present at Mass. God bless you.

Monday 13th December 1943
Canteen day and oh what a feast of good things we had from the canteen. My sweet tooth will be my undoing. I am still smoking my pipe of peace a lot. Our Red Cross food is to be used for Christmas Day. The snows are melting and temperature is now 38°F. God bless you.

Tuesday 14th December 1943
Very mild today with rain. Oh my, Eileen how I long to see you again and be happy with you always.

Wednesday 15th December 1943
We got our Red Cross parcels today; I got tea, sugar, beef stew & rice, a tin of corned beef and a little cocoa. I was unlucky in the draw for chocolate and sweets. Oh my darling when will it all end.

Thursday 16th December 1943
I am alone with you in my room tonight – Maloney and 100 men have gone off to Hakodate. It was a very sudden move and there was great excitement. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 17th December 1943
I have been lonely today without Maloney; Saar, Mitchell, and Smith are gone, so we have 15 British and 6 Dutch officers now. Another pneumonia case last night. Coal fatigue today for one hour. My room is a bit bare now; have now my statue on the table with your snap. God bless you.

Saturday 18th December 1943
Have just finished a cup of artificial coffee and Nestlé's milk! A present from one of the sergeants. Paddy is still doing me proud here. I intend having a feast at Christmas; must make some Christmas cards for you Eileen. An hour's coal heaving in the afternoon. God bless you.

Sunday 19th December 1943 (Yasume)
My darling, I had Mass and Communion this morning for you, for peace, and for Ireland. So it has been a happy day, though bitterly cold. All is well at the hospital thank God. God bless you.

Monday 20th December 1943
My darling, if only you could realise what it means to me to know that there is someone in far off Ireland who loves me – it can make my prison life so sweet. God bless you.

Tuesday 21st December 1943
Time is passing very quickly here because I am occupied all day long. Did some darning and coal heaving today. We have heaps of coal here thank God. We are having Mass on Christmas Eve at 9 p.m. I forgot to tell you that almost every man of the 100 who left recently shook hands with me and thanked me! God bless you.

Wednesday 22nd December 1943
One of our men was carried into hospital unconscious today from the guard house; been there for 10 days without blankets – he was stone cold and will die soon[12]. God bless you.

Thursday 23rd December 1943
You are too good for me, Eileen. I was forced today at the "bayonet point" to omit the cause of death of Suttle. God bless you.

Friday 24th December 1943
Christmas Eve! I have just returned from Midnight Mass (8.30!); and I am happy and sad at the same time. My Mass and Communion were for you, Eileen. I thought of the silver candlesticks and how I would be absent yet another Christmas from you. God bless you.

Saturday 25th December 1943
Christmas Day! The worst I have ever known. Special present of one apple each! The men worked an extra hour. The snow came a bit late in the afternoon. Concert was cancelled – too cold. I had a day dream of you my darling preparing your Christmas dinner at Spring Villa; I saw a diamond ring on your finger; I saw two silver candlesticks too. God bless you.

[12] The is Private Raymond Suttle. His case was described in detail in Frank's war crimes' affidavit (see Appendix A).

Sunday 26th December 1943
Mass and Communion in my room this morning. Father O'Mahoney offered up Holy Mass for my intentions – which were *you*, Eileen. It was 6° below zero today *and* the Siberian wind blowing. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 27th December 1943
Oh what a heaven on earth my room is now – Mass and Communion in it again this morning for you, Eileen. What joy and consolation this brings to me. Only 4° below zero today!

Tuesday 28th December 1943
My darling Mass *every* day this week in my little room. Oh I love it and don't mind the cold a bit. Have finished "Guy and Pauline" (Mackenzie). God bless you.

Wednesday 29th December 1943
Our anniversary (3rd)! I can still picture you writing that eventful letter three years ago at Spring Villa and timidly asking if I felt the same about you then as I did in the old days. How I wish I had all your letters with me now. No Mass today as roll call was too late. I shall have to miss Mass tomorrow on account of sick parade. Another pneumonia today. I shall love you for ever. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 30th December 1943
My darling, I have been reading your letters again for the thousandth time. A thaw set in today and the snow has vanished. Coal heaving in the afternoon. God bless you.

Friday 31st December 1943
Many degrees below zero tonight – and so I am cold! Mass and Communion this morning for you in the new chapel. Fr. O'Mahoney wants to call it the Chapel of Our Lady of the Snows!! A holiday for the men but not for me. I still love you Eileen. God bless you.

Chapter 3:
1944

Saturday 1st January 1944
New Year's Day – the last year of the war please God. We began today by parading and facing the Emperor's palace! I had Mass and Communion for you at *11 a.m.* We had 3 oranges and two apples each as a present. God bless you.

Sunday 2nd January 1944
Mass and Communion this morning again for you and all at home, Eileen. The Nips refused to send one of my patients to a decent hospital for operation today; the man has osteomyelitis and will die. My darling, how I long to get back to civilisation again. God bless you.

Monday 3rd January 1944
Oh my darling, I had such a very wonderful dream about you last night. We were so happy. I have had a sad day – two deaths – one osteomyelitis or pyaemia and the other dysentery. Extracted tooth for Major Jordan. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 4th January 1944
I went to the local crematorium today on an open truck and was famished! It was a weird place – bells tolling, robed Buddhist priests chanting, thousands of relations staring at me as if I were an odd being. We shovel coal *every* day now. My darling, I *know* the war will soon be over – the Germans cannot last much longer. I shall always be loving you. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 5th January 1944
Do you realise, young woman, that I am awakened at nights by earth tremors, my bed and room are rocking to and fro! Still bitterly cold. Capt. Pinkney is very ill and I have nothing to give him or diagnose him with. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 6th January 1944
Mass and Communion this morning. And oh it was so very cold – 9°F below freezing point. Had a quiet day. Am reading Sherlock Holmes Case Book. It is quite refreshing. God bless you, darling.

Friday 7th January 1944
A terrific blizzard this evening *and* snow all over my bed! How would you like that young woman? Not to mention earth tremors in the morning and coal hauling in the cold afternoon. God bless you.

Saturday 8th January 1944
A blue sky, a strong sun, snow covered ground, 7°F below freezing! My darling, the war will surely be over soon for you all at home. There is great discontent in this country among the workers; they proclaim that Britain is "Joto". God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 9th January 1944
Feast of the Holy Family – Mass and Communion this morning. I sent father a postcard tonight but heaven alone knows if it will ever reach home or not. God bless you.

Monday 10th January 1944
I sent postcards to father and Gerry tonight but will they ever receive them? – I know not. Snow still falling though not so cold. A winter at home will be *nothing* to me. Japanese doctor came today and gave us no hope. God bless you.

Tuesday 11th January 1944
My darling, we were issued with greatcoats – Australian pattern (privates). Oh what a difference it makes. My turn to light the fire in the morning and make tea! Nothing exciting today; still well below zero! God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 12th January 1944
Another day nearer to you, my darling, and freedom. Blizzards today and very cold in the snow. I saw a golden eagle today and several hawks. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 13th January 1944
Mass and Communion this morning for you my darling. I am happy. Have finished reading "Full Flavour". God bless you.

Friday 14th January 1944
Another day nearer to you, my darling. Still cold. The guards think the war will be over in two months, but I still think they are optimistic! Maybe I shall be home for Christmas – wouldn't it be wonderful, Eileen? God bless you.

Saturday 15th January 1944
Mass and Communion this morning thank God – Mass for the Dead. It was 18°F today! God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 16th January 1944
Mass and Communion today for you my darling. Fr. O'Mahoney has promised to say Mass on 19th and 20th for Josie (R.I.P.) and you, Eileen for your birthday. A quiet day for our Yasume – blue sky, sun, snow. Play rummy every night and win always. God bless you.

Monday 17th January 1944
The days are slipping past me very rapidly and they bring me nearer and nearer to you, my darling. Heavy snow today. I like Timmer, Jonker, and Meys of the Dutch officers and dislike Borski, Jongsma, and Lutter. And I adore you, Eileen. God bless you.

Tuesday 18th January 1944
Another uneventful day but I love you more and more my own darling. Haven't you grown weary of waiting for me all these years? I am not worth waiting for, Eileen. Why cannot you see that? Love must be blind! Roll on freedom. God bless you.

Wednesday 19th January 1944
Nothing exciting today but tomorrow will be your 31st birthday, Eileen. How old we both are now! I have a very precious present for you. Next year I shall be with you on your birthday, please God. Maybe we shall be married. God bless you, darling.

Thursday 20th January 1944
Many happy returns my own darling. Oh how I longed to be with you this day. Some letters came today *but* none for me. Have had fever last night and today; better tonight. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 21st January 1944
Did you have a very happy birthday, Eileen? Mass and Communion this morning for you. Very fit today. Cured a case of hysteria. God bless you.

Saturday 22nd January 1944
Snow, ice, and cold every day. God bless you.

Sunday 23rd January 1944
Mass and Communion this morning. We are to be allowed half an hour's march each morning before breakfast outside camp. I have started my *book* again for you. I tamed the "Basher"[13] today with threats. God bless you.

Monday 24th January 1944
I have been wondering what we will look like to each other when we meet again? Will you be disappointed. Thank God you have probably heard of my safety by this time. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 25th January 1944
I have been with you all day long in my thoughts. We had a 2 ½ miles run this morning in the snow; I was the leader and was first home! Many others were long behind! Another day nearer to you. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 26th January 1944
Mass and Communion this morning for you, my darling. I was weighed today and am only 81kg (12 st 10 lbs) which is my normal peacetime weight. God bless you.

Thursday 27th January 1944
I have been happy today because things are going well, thank God. We had a marvellous walk this morning in the snow – temperature 9° below freezing. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 28th January 1944
We still have lots of oranges in spite of winter and the war. Food has improved a lot thanks to my monthly report; clothing is better for the men; soap issued today. I read my Irish verse in bed last night. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 29th January 1944
We had a marvellous run this morning away into the country before breakfast. Asari Gunsu[14] came with us. God bless you.

Sunday 30th January 1944
Mass and Communion this morning for you my darling. A two mile run at 6.20 a.m. in the snow! A quiet day thank God and a happy one. God bless you.

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[13] "Basher" was the nickname given to the Japanese guard, Sadao Watanabe. He was mentioned frequently in Keith Mitchell's book and his actions were also described by Frank in his war crimes' affidavit. (See Postscript and Appendix A).
[14] This is Eiji Asari a Japanese guard sergeant. He is also mentioned in Frank's war crimes affidavit as well as in Keith Mitchell's book (see Postscript and Appendix A).

Monday 31st January 1944
Mass and Communion this morning for you, Eileen. Paddy has brought me a new carpet and chromium cup with lid. My room is a treat now. American Red Cross parcels arrived today but heaven knows when we shall get them. God bless you, darling.

Tuesday 1st February 1944
A terrific earthquake – the buildings were swaying about for two minutes in the afternoon. I pay a special visit to our dear Lord each day for you, my darling. Still reading Irish Verse. God bless you.

Wednesday 2nd February 1944
A Japanese General paid us a visit today and inspected the camp. No Red Cross parcels yet, my darling, and oh how we are looking forward to them. God bless you.

Thursday 3rd February 1944
Our little chapel is now called "Our Lady of the Snows". Yes there has been snow on the ground for months now. It was 6°F recently. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 4th February 1944
Mass and Communion this morning for you, my darling. Altar breads arrived from a local Trappist Monastry yesterday, thank God. Alas Fr. O'Mahoney will be leaving soon with 15 officers to Hakodate. Oh my Eileen it will be awful having no Mass here. May he bless you.

Saturday 5th February 1944
Paddy made me a wonderful apple and orange rice pudding this afternoon. I hope he will be kept on as my batman when the others go away. No new developments about the move as yet. Very warm these days 0°C! God bless you.

Sunday 6th February 1944
Mass and Communion this morning for you, Eileen. It was a Yasume Day and not very exciting. Am reading "The Road to Nowhere" again! I sent you a postcard this evening. Still heaps of snow and cold. Synthetic coffee! God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 7th February 1944
It has snowed all day long and yet it has been quite warm. Nothing exciting today. God bless you.

Tuesday 8th February 1944
The coldest day ever – the north-west (Siberian) wind has been blowing all day long. The ground is covered with snow about 1 ft. thick. My room is like an ice chest *and* I have to light the fire tomorrow morning. God bless you.

Wednesday 9th February 1944
My own darling, it has been such a happy day for me. Mass and Communion this morning for you, and father, and Ireland. Then came the news that a letter has arrived in camp for *me*! How I long for it and hope it is from you, Eileen. Then came a present from a group of men – tobacco as a token "of services rendered under difficult conditions". This made me happy to think that the men appreciate my work. God bless you.

Thursday 10th February 1944

We have received our American Red Cross parcels (4/5 each) – coffee, sugar, Klein, Chesterfield cigarettes (6), formed beef, soap, Kraft cheese, patte pork, jam, chocolate etc., etc. The men are all delighted. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 11th February 1944

Mass and Communion this morning for your health and a special visit to Him in the chapel tonight. Japanese holiday; we had 3 oranges and 1 apple each today. Still very cold and snowing. Your letter has not reached me yet Eileen. God bless you darling.

Saturday 12th February 1944

Oh my own darling I am so very happy since your letter came this evening. It was dated 13th Dec. 1942 and you were preparing for Christmas without me. God bless you.

Sunday 13th February 1944

Mass and Communion this morning in thanksgiving for your letter. Oh my darling, I realise the worry I have caused you and I am not worth it all. I have caused you heartbreaking tears and I am ashamed. It breaks my heart to know that you are worrying. Your letter is bewildering in parts – you talk of your *substitute* at Omagh. My own darling, did you have to give up your job on account of illness?[15] I do not know what to think. If only I could have the missing letters; if I could only speak to you. Eileen darling, why oh *why* have you not danced for a whole year – you who love dancing so much. I want you to be so happy – you *must* go to dances, you *must* enjoy yourself. I am glad you still burn our two candles on Christmas Eve. No letters from anyone but you thank God – I mean I want yours more than any others. It seems you have been lucky to have had a card from me in October 1942 – I have not heard of any other cards reaching home even in December. I feel that I have let you down – everyone at home seems to be married except you, Eileen; you are the Cinderella of them all! I am so glad you still visit Beechwood and meet Gerry often. He is a brick to write to me every week and yet not a letter has reached me. The Dutch doctor is ill and so I have double work – with my cough, cold, and diarrhoea, but *I* mustn't go sick here – too much depends on me. There is a wild 'flu epidemic + bronchitis + pneumonia. I still love my work, thank God; I was meant to be a doctor if ever anyone was meant to be one. God bless you, Eileen, for trusting in me and waiting for me. I have been navvying for the past week with a pickaxe! Can you imagine me doing demolition work in the cookhouse. I am really exempted but the other officers (some!) do it, so I lend a hand when I can – I want to do my share. All my love Eileen, Frank.

Monday 14th February 1944

I have had a very busy day my darling, but had time off to think of you and pray in the chapel to Him for you. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 15th February 1944

Two years a prisoner today – two long years of agony separated from you; but it has been God's will and has not been in vain. God bless you.

[15] Eileen temporarily gave up her teaching position in Omagh because of ill health. Her substitute was Margaret McGuigan who later became godmother to Frank and Eileen's youngest child, Carl. While in Belfast, Eileen got a civil service job working in postal censorship.

Wednesday 16th February 1944
Another day nearer to you, my darling. The snow is several feet deep now and the cold varies – causing much chest trouble. I have now got the first cough of my life! I was chipping mortar off bricks all afternoon! What a doctor. God bless you, darling.

Thursday 17th February 1944
I am wondering how I am going to make up to you for all the years of happiness that are due to you – you have missed so much of life on my account Eileen. God bless you for loving me so much and being so loyal.

Friday 18th February 1944
I am in bed this evening with fever, cough, and cold. The officers are due to leave here on 21st. Not certain whether Fr. O'Mahoney will go or not. God grant that he remains behind. God bless you.

Saturday 19th February 1944
I am much better today thank God. Alas I am losing Fr. O'Mahoney on Monday. Oh my darling, I am heart-broken this day because I shall not have Mass for months and months – maybe not until the war is over. Six of us are remaining here – Borski, Jongsma, Jonker, Wynd, Lutter, and myself. God bless you, darling.

Sunday 20th February 1944 (Yasume)
Mass and Communion this morning for your intentions my darling. I think it will be my last mass in Muroran until the war is over. It is an awful thought, Eileen. I will pray even harder now for a speedy release. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 21st February 1944
Well, my darling, we are a lonely lot here tonight since the 15 officers went to Hakodate at 1.30 p.m.[16] I was allowed to go to the station and see them off very informally (for prisoners). Lt. Hirati[17] was very decent about it all. Fr. O'Mahoney was very upset about leaving, but I promised to look after his flock. We exchanged addresses. God bless you.

Tuesday 22nd February 1944
Bitterly cold today. Had a note from Hakodate to say that things were not so good. A quiet day here. God bless you.

Wednesday 23rd February 1944
I am in very good spirits recently and think the war will end this year some time. This place is in the same latitude as Lyons but has the climate of Norway! Three of our men have died at Hakodate. Oh my darling, how much longer? God bless you.

Thursday 24th February 1944
The eternal snows are still with us but it is much milder. God bless you, darling.

[16] After this point Frank was the senior officer in the camp and therefore the Officer Commanding all of the troops.
[17] Kaichi Hirate was the Camp Commandant and is mentioned in Keith Mitchell's book as well as indirectly in Frank's war crimes' affidavit. See Postscript and Appendix A.

Friday 25th February 1944
A terrific blizzard today and the snow is banked up away above the windows in places! And yet I like it very much better than a Japanese summer! Do you realise young woman that I am now in command of 376 men here? I am so *very* important as the senior officer in the camp! However it has not changed me a bit. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 26th February 1944
My darling, should anything ever happen to me I want you to look after my batman, Paddy. He has been so good and devoted to me; he has nursed me and spoiled me ever since I have known him. All I can say is "Thank God I have such a man with me". Still snowing and blowing. Nothing much today. There are rumours of another party of officers and men coming here soon. God bless you.

Sunday 27th February 1944
A hot sun, a blue sky. A peaceful day – the first Sunday in Lent. I intend not opening any of my Red Cross things until Easter Sunday – that will be *some* struggle in this place. The camp is quiet; there are no more beatings (recently) and thank God I have had something to do with it all. I have done all in my power to change this camp for the men and things have improved immensely. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 28th February 1944
My darling, I *almost* had a wireless message sent to you today. One British officer was allowed to send one – and I lost the toss with Wynd! Still there will be another chance soon. Biscuits and cigarettes + sugar today. More snow. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 29th February 1944
My darling, how can I ever love you enough for all you have done for me? I shall make it all up to you please God when I reach home again when I get back home. Nothing much today. God bless you.

Wednesday 1st March 1944
How I do miss Mass and Communion these days, Eileen. I appreciate them more than ever now that I cannot have them. We have no news of any kind and we are in the dark – no newspapers at all. It will make wonderful reading afterwards when I reach home. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 2nd March 1944
My darling, spring has come at last though the snows are still with us. An air raid practice today with armed troops in the camp. I am brushing up my Irish vocabulary today. I mean to take it up again when I go back home to you. God bless you.

Friday 3rd March 1944
I paid out all our men tonight – I did it alone in ½ hour; it used to need 10 officers 3 hours on the job! We are having much better treatment nowadays – we think it means the end of the war is near at hand! May God grant it *will* come very soon. God bless you Eileen.

Saturday 4th March 1944
The sun has been shining all day long since March came in like a lamb – temperature now 40°F! Spring has come and snows are melting and everything is slush under foot. Paddy made me another apple and orange pudding tonight. Tomorrow is Yasume. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 5th March 1944

I said the Rosary, Litany, prayer for peace, and night prayers with the men today – we had quite a crowd. My darling, do you realise that I might be home for Christmas – then we could burn our candles together and have a wonderful time. God bless you, darling.

Monday 6th March 1944

I am thinking of St. Patrick's Day and Ceílidhs and Ireland and you my darling today. Please God we shall spend the next one together in Dublin and go to the Mansion House and dance all the dances I have loved. I want to see you do a hornpipe again and sing a Gaelic song – how I loved you for them both. God bless you.

Tuesday 7th March 1944

My darling, Spring is still here. Two casualties from beating today – a broken arm and a broken head (2 stitches). God bless you.

Wednesday 8th March 1944

Another day nearer to you, my darling. I grow weary at times of waiting but then I remember that you are suffering as much as I am. It must end sometime, my darling. I can still picture our home at Beechwood. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 9th March 1944

I have written a broadcast message to father tonight. How I do hope it will reach him or you. I may be allowed to send the next one to you, darling. A man died suddenly this morning from haemoptysis. It has worried me a lot. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 10th March 1944

Cigarettes, biscuits and oranges today. Went to the crematorium today in lorry; the latter was stranded in the snow and we had to carry the coffin over ½ mile of deep snow. Later we went shopping with the guard and also to the post office. Very interesting day. God bless you, Eileen.

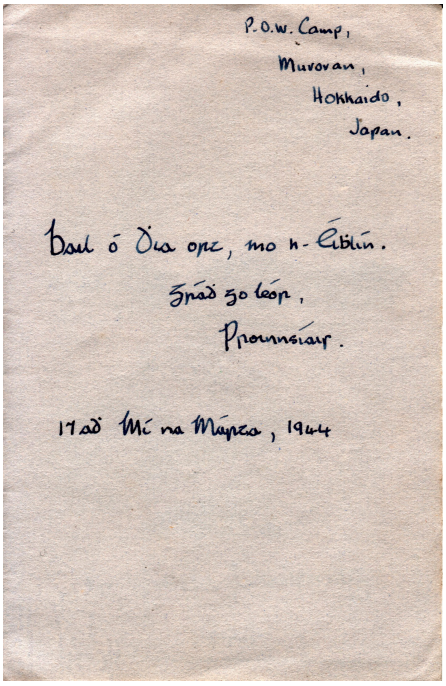
Saturday 11th March 1944

Oh my darling, how much longer will it be? I am only living for that day when we meet at Southampton. I shall recognise your divorcee suit at once. A quiet day. God bless you darling.

Sunday 12th March 1944

A few nights ago I dreamed that you opened your arms to receive me when I reached home. I have daydreams about my first day at home. God bless you darling.





The special St Patrick's Day card Frank had made for Eileen.

Monday 13th March 1944

My darling, I am having a special card made for your St. Patrick's Day greetings. Please God our next one will be spent together. I am reading "The Fool of the Family" (Margaret Kennedy). God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 14th March 1944

Inspection by new Col. from Hakodate[18]. Chatted to us four officers for 2 hours in perfect English. He declared that Japanese women were the best in the world – I was bold enough to differ and declare Irish girls to be the world's best! I am so proud of you darling. God bless you.

Wednesday 15th March 1944

My darling, I found out today that my broadcast message has not left camp as yet – so heaven knows when it will reach Belfast! Some replies have been received at Hakodate. Nothing much today. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 16th March 1944

There is a terrific wave of optimism in the camp at present. We all feel that freedom will come soon. Paddy thinks it will come on 24th of this month! He made me a lovely apple and orange pudding today. Wrote my St. Patrick's Day cards tonight. God bless you.

Friday 17th March 1944

I had a present this morning of a 4-leaf shamrock from a patient but it was only on loan! I have had many shake-hands from the men – even from a Eurasian! Paddy was very pleased with his card which I sent to him in a stamped envelope. You had one too darling, Gerry, and Sgt. Collier – the latter was delighted. God bless you Eileen darling. Snowed all day long – a dreary St. Patrick's Day indeed.

[18] This marks the arrival of Colonel Shigeo Emoto and it led to a significant improvement in the conditions of the prisoners (see Postscript).

Saturday 18th March 1944
My darling, I had another grand dream about you last night. I was telling you all about the Malayan campaign, about India, and Japan. I have had a wonderful time travelling free all over the Far East. God bless you.

Sunday 19th March 1944 (Yasume)
We had the usual Rosary and prayers today in the chapel. I sang "Father O'Flynn" at a hospital concert this afternoon and had a great reception. I am keeping the 4-leaf shamrock until I leave this camp. Surely it will bring me luck – quick peace. God bless you.

Monday 20th March 1944
My own darling, I am happier these days because I know the war will end this year sometime and that soon you will be in my arms – for the first time. God bless you.

Tuesday 21st March 1944
Nothing excited happening to me nowadays. I like the lads more and more. God bless you.

Wednesday 22nd March 1944
I have been reading your letters for the thousandth time again today and I love them more each time. Our time draws near. The second front will come soon and Germany will collapse – that will settle everything out here in quick time. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 23rd March 1944
More letters arrived today but none for me as yet, I would give anything for another note from you, darling. You must be suffering during all these weary months of war as I am. God bless you.

Friday 24th March 1944
A couple of feet of snow on the ground today but it is not too cold. There was a prize giving ceremony this evening in the assembly hall and I read the commandant's speech. God bless you.

Saturday 25th March 1944 (Annunciation)
The new doctor is due to arrive here on Monday. It will be a novelty for us all – we might get some news of the outside world. Paddy has bought me a wonderful new mattress – he is a treasure to me. Nothing exciting today. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 26th March 1944
Passion Sunday has been a quiet day. Surely we must see each other soon again. God will give us strength to endure it all. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 27th March 1944
The new doctor arrived this morning – Lt. Andler[19] of the American Army. He has just come from the Philippines. I like him very much; he has four medical orderlies with him. My diarrhoea is rampant again. God bless you, Eileen.

[19] This is Maxwell Andler, a survivor of the Bataan Death March (see Postscript).



1st Lt. Maxwell Andler of the US Army Air Corps

Tuesday 28th March 1944

Andler is a grand chap and we are getting along famously. He hails from Boston but lives in Los Angeles. My Shakespeare arrived from Hakodate and I am in heaven again! We think the war will end in about 6 months time – pray God it will do so. God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 29th March 1944

My darling, I have a grand photograph of the officers now. I came out rather well – in fact the best of all. I am busy these days as Doctor Andler is only an onlooker as yet. He is quite horrified at some things here. Twenty men beaten last night. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 30th March 1944

A quiet day of Spring with little work. I am liking Andler more every day. My pneumonia case is doing very well thank God. Food remains excellent but no sugar recently nor canteens. I am reading Shakespeare's Sonnets these days and I love you. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 31st March 1944

Another month nearer, darling, and the rumours are good. Andler had some fever today but is better now. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 1st April 1944

Tomorrow is Yasume Day and I still adore you, my Eileen. Andler still has fever but will not stay in bed. I am reading "The Madness of Monty" by Robert Keable. Oh my own darling how weary you must be of waiting for me and the end of the war. God bless you, Eileen darling.

Sunday 2nd April 1944 (Palm Sunday; Yasume)

A very busy day, my darling. Big sick parades, an operation on a cyst (very successful), hospital concert – I sang the "Mountains of Mourne", a bath, prayers at 4 p.m., etc. Andler is still in bed. I lent him my mattress and hot water bottle. I like him more every day. Three National Anthems after the concert today! God bless you.

Monday 3rd April 1944
Springtime in Japan – a heavy fall of snow last night! I am kept busy as many of the men are ill with the changing weather. Andler is a little better tonight – I am his nurse, though not a very attractive one! God bless you.

Tuesday 4th April 1944
How can I ever expect to deserve a good wife like you, Eileen? I shall try hard enough please God. Andler is not much better. God bless you, darling.

Wednesday 5th April 1944
Andler still has fever and I am still nursing him. God bless you Eileen.

Thursday 6th April 1944
My darling, I am now reading "Romeo and Juliet" – and I love you more than ever Romeo could have loved Juliet! Paddy is still a jewel – has made me a pipe rack today and his first card. I am sending you another card in a day or two. Andler still in bed. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 7th April 1944
Good Friday and we had a large crowd in our chapel this evening after work. I read the passion for the lads, said the Rosary and prayer for peace followed by kissing the cross. Andler is no better. The commandant blames *me* for his illness. More Red Cross food came today. God bless you.

Saturday 8th April 1944
Lent is over at last and really it has passed quickly. I intend having a feast tomorrow – coffee, milk, sugar, bread, butter, jam, spam, corned pork etc. Aren't you jealous? I sent your card off today. God bless you, darling.

Sunday 9th April 1944 (Easter Sunday)
My darling, it has not been a happy Easter and Ireland is my sorrow at this time. They have been given an ultimatum[20] and all are standing to. I am also worried about Una and Anne in Dublin. I did not have a big feast – God bless you Eileen.

Monday 10th April 1944
Oh, what an Easter Monday to spend! I have had trouble with the powers that be over thermometers this morning. I now suspect Andler of typhoid and I am his nurse all day long. Many complaints about food distribution so I am taking charge of the cookhouse. *I am* the commanding officer of the camp, of the hospital, and the cookhouse! God bless you Eileen.

Tuesday 11th April 1944
We received our Red Cross parcels today – 4 among 9 men! I was lucky in the draw for coffee and lots of butter. Rumours of bread every day. I am reading a thriller. Andler is much better. He wants *us* to visit him in the U.S.A. God bless you, Eileen.

[20] This could refer to the February 1944 US request to Ireland (which was a neutral country in WW2) to expel Axis diplomats from the country in advance of the Normandy invasion. The Irish Taoiseach, Eamonn DeValera, refused.

Wednesday 12th April 1944
I have been walking on air today – for some reason. I am very optimistic about a speedy end to the war and back home to you before Christmas. Andler is O.K. again. I was told by Sgt. Evans today that the men consider I am doing a very fine job of work here. Two extractions this evening and an ear syringed etc. God bless you.

Thursday 13th April 1944
Coffee, milk, and sugar t.d.s.! I am still happy my darling. New camp regulations – yasumes 3 times a month, music every night, bread very often. Paddy is a jewel these days – he is grand fun. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 14th April 1944
The sun shines all day long now and summer will soon be here. Still having feasts. My health is good again. Andler and I get on well together. God bless you.

Saturday 15th April 1944
We had to turn out this afternoon and shovel stones with the Nippon Shoko – it was grand fun. One of the men was thrown out of hospital today – he has severe rectal haemorrhage. Oh the ignominy of it all and the helplessness. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 16th April 1944
A Yasume day *and* our first sleep-in till 7 a.m.! Bread, butter, jam, and meat stew for supper + coffee and milk. We had prayers as usual in our chapel. I am liking Andler more and more each day – we get on well together. Am reading "Dusty Answer" – awful book. God bless you.

Monday 17th April 1944
I am reading Galsworthy's "The End of the Chapter" – three stories in one book of 960 pages. The weather has been glorious and keeps me optimistic. We have bread every other day now. Little work to do and plenty of time. I am the new P.T. leader at 9 a.m. God bless you.

Tuesday 18th April 1944
My Eileen, I shall love you forever and ever. Lovely weather. I did some gardening in the afternoon. Pray hard for me as I do for you. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 19th April 1944
Another glorious day and I am still sane in my prison camp. If you could see these poor creatures dragging weary limbs back from work very evening, weak and half starved, you would be heart broken. My job is so futile. I had a long chat with Jardine (my TB case) – we talked of Bangor, Carlingford Lough etc. He is a grand chap – such pluck. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 20th April 1944
A man broke a collar bone at work today and I fixed it up with Andler's assistance. The Japanese were very impressed. I do miss my freedom in such wonderful weather. I want to walk with you over the green hills and moors of Ireland. God bless you.

Friday 21st April 1944
I have a bad cold and diarrhoea but not too bad. However I am in very good spirits nowadays. Andler and I are fast friends – he is invaluable to me here. Sgt. Perrins RAMC was sent out to work because he broke 2 thermometers. God bless you.

Saturday 22nd April 1944
My darling, you should see the lovely pictures that Paddy has put in my room today. You and I can never thank him enough for what he has done for me – I am like his son! God bless you darling.

Sunday 23rd April 1944
A glorious quiet day and we are in good spirits still. I have still my hunch that the war will be over by the end of this year. I am still reading Galsworthy and loving it. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 24th April 1944
Another day gone and another day nearer to you my darling. I have been describing Dublin and Ireland to Andler today. He would dearly love to see it all. We may see him in the U.S.A. when we visit it, Eileen. God bless you darling.

Tuesday 25th April 1944
My darling, it has been a weird day for us. It was a Japanese holiday. We had cigarettes and biscuits. Andler, Wynd, and I had coffee and toast with Asari Gunso tonight after supper. I am reading "If Winter Comes". God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 26th April 1944
Time is passing quickly and thank God it is bringing us closer together. I have had a very busy day; rained without ceasing and the men were wet through. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 27th April 1944
My darling, lots of biscuits today as the Emperor's Birthday approaches. I am still in good spirits thank God. We had a shot putting contest – America, Japan, Java, Holland, England & Ireland. I won for Ireland!

Friday 28th April 1944
We heard a rumour of the second front today but it was not true! How I wish it would come soon and end this terrible war and bring us together again. We had a half-hour's run this morning outside camp and I did enjoy it. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 29th April 1944
The Emperor's Birthday; grand parade in the morning – I read the commandant's speech to the men; I sang "Father O'Flynn" at a terrific concert. We had Hawaiian music and Hula Hula girls dancing etc.! God bless you.

Sunday 30th April 1944
My darling, I spent the whole forenoon in the country digging up a field with Andler and Wynd and 10 men & Japanese. We had a glorious view from our hillock; roasted potatoes helped a lot! And now I am pleasantly tired and writing in bed. God bless you Eileen.

Monday 1st May 1944
Another holiday today, Eileen. I read your fine letters yet once more. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 2nd May 1944
The High Commandant from Hakodate is here now; is interviewing *every* man in camp and granting *all* requests. New orders have been issued and I, a Major in the RAMC, am not obliged to salute anyone in camp. God bless you darling.

Wednesday 3rd May 1944
My darling, the camp is being gradually transformed into a place of luxury. The High Commandant is a dynamic force in this place and makes things happen at high speed. I shall always remember these days. I feel so very much more near freedom now. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 4th May 1944
The camp is still changing its face as the days speed by. All men are to have sugar ration soon. My darling, I love and adore you this night. God bless you.

Friday 5th May 1944
I had a chat with the camp High Commander. He was very pleasant. Another death today (Quarterman) – he wanted to die. God bless you.

Saturday 6th May 1944
I have had a terrific day; funeral in the afternoon; spectacle parade in the evening. I didn't finish work until 9 p.m. tonight. Oh my Eileen when will it all end. God bless you darling.

Sunday 7th May 1944
I am so sure that we shall meet soon again – before the end of the year all will be over please God. We received American Red Cross medicines and toilettes today. The medicines were wonderful if we can keep them. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 8th May 1944 (Charlie's Birthday R.I.P.)
We had a hectic day. Interviewed by the High Commandant for 3 hours; we had a marvellous time. His tour ended with a grand concert in the evening in honour of our guest. I sang. At the end I made a speech of thanks! God bless you.

Tuesday 9th May 1944
A quieter day, thank God. The commander went back to Hakodate this morning. All the men have spectacles now; dental repairs and fillings daily. God bless you.

Wednesday 10th May 1944
My darling, the camp is a happier place these days and it has made me happier too. I can never be happy really until we meet again, Eileen. God bless you, darling.

Thursday 11th May 1944
A very hectic yasume day for me. I have been working till 8 p.m. tonight – and I have accomplished some things at least. A concert in the hospital this evening – Andler and I went along to it. Prayers this evening; a guard presented arms at the door. God bless you.

Friday 12th May 1944
Officers were issued with 5 U.S. blankets today. We were also given the Y.M.C.A. radio for music in the evenings! I had a try at real baseball today with Andler and was a great success. I remember a game on Ranafast strand with you onlooking! God bless you.

Saturday 13th May 1944
We had an inspection today by an officer from Tokyo Bureau. Had a good try out again with Doc Andler and Matuozzi at baseball. God bless you, darling.

Sunday 14th May 1944
A quiet day with more baseball in the warm spring sunshine. The stoves were removed today but we don't miss them at all. God bless you.

Monday 15th May 1944
I had football and baseball this afternoon with Hirate, Andler, and the orderlies. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 16th May 1944
My darling, I had a marvellous afternoon playing American football. I found that I could catch the ball in grand style and throw it better than the Americans! The good weather makes me much happier. Andler and I are fast friends nowadays. God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 17th May 1944
No games today; no sunshine. I am so pleased with the camp nowadays – the men are happy and contented. God bless you Eileen.

Thursday 18th May 1944 (Ascension)
Rained all day and very cold – no stoves; wrapped in blankets all the afternoon. Still I am wondrously happy under these circumstances. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 19th May 1944
More rain and cold today. I am reading "The Four Graces" by Richmael Crompton – it's a poor book. It was so cold today that I had to go to bed in the afternoon! Oh my darling, when will it all end? When will the second front come – if ever?? God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 20th May 1944
Canteen today of biscuits, apples, cigarettes, and matches! Weather is dreary and cold. God bless you.

Sunday 21st May 1944 (Yasume Day)
I have just returned from a wonderful concert. There was a skit in it about me and Doctor Andler! It was a busy day with pay and vitamins and prayers. But I had time to think of you and dream of you darling. God bless you Eileen.

Monday 22nd May 1944
My T.B. patient, Jardine, died today and it was a happy release after 6 months in bed with fever every day. We gave him everything but without success. God bless you, darling.

Tuesday 23rd May 1944
A marvellous game of football today with Andler, two Japanese sergeants and American and British troops! It was a mixture of rugby and American football. God bless you darling.

Wednesday 24th May 1944
I had a glorious walk today in the hills and woods outside Muroran. It was a cloudless day and the sun was warm. We had a picnic in the woods! We had two Japanese privates (unarmed), Lutter, Matuozzi, Moffat, Mayer, and I in the party. We were free for 6 hours. What a glorious view we had of the Pacific and the volcanoes on the other side of Volcano Bay. How I longed for you and wanted you today, Eileen. I had a quiet look at your snap occasionally. Some boys had cables from home today via Vatican. God bless you.

Thursday 25th May 1944
A glorious day with two hours real baseball in the afternoon. I was as good as the best American! I have heard the cuckoo every day for the past 10 days but today I saw it for the first time. We have bread daily now. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 26th May 1944
A hundred men will be going to Yakumo soon and I am dreading being sent there again in spite of its beautiful surroundings! I had a good round of baseball in the afternoon with Matuozzi and Finucane. God bless you.

Saturday 27th May 1944
May has nearly ended and no second front has come yet! No games today. I had a minor operation in the afternoon. A man's toe was almost cut off with pig iron and I managed to sew it on again with Andler's help. God bless you.

Sunday 28th May 1944
My darling, we had apples and biscuits today. I asked the Japanese officer today not to be sent to Yakumo, with a similar request for Andler. Capt. Brown, an American dentist is due here on 10th June to stay for 2 months. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 29th May 1944
My darling, I had a dream about my relations in Derry[21] last night. It has been a boring day – I even slept for two hours this afternoon. I am very likely to be sent to Yakumo next month. Oh how I wish the war would end soon. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 30th May 1944
I have been happy today. My friendship with Andler now means a lot to me. We have grand fun together. We laugh at life. I love you. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 31st May 1944
A busy day with work and play and pay. No second front yet. God bless you darling.

[21] The Murrays came from the townland of Cullion near Desertmartin, Co. Derry/Londonderry. In 1828 Frank's great-grandfather, John Murray, used his mark to sign an indenture renting a farm from the Worshipful Company of Drapers. Frank's father, Charles Murray, was born on the same farm.

Thursday 1st June 1944 (Yasume)
My own darling, how I have loved you this day with all my heart and soul; and how I have missed you too. We had a wonderful all-British programme at the hospital concert tonight. Our football team beat the Dutch 5-3! Japanese dentist came at 4 p.m. God bless you.

Friday 2nd June 1944
I am eating bread and an apple sitting on my bed writing this to you. God bless you, darling.

Saturday 3rd June 1944
We had biscuits, cigarettes, and matches for canteen today. It has been a very ordinary day with clouds and rain. The hill above the camp is now a mass of brilliant green foliage and cherry blossom & azaleas. I am reading "Saint's Progress" (Galsworthy). God bless you darling.

Sunday 4th June 1944
It is 8 p.m. and I am already in bed! I do miss you more and more as the days go by, Eileen. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 5th June 1944
I had my photograph taken today sitting between Wynd and Andler. Every man in camp is having his photo given to him! We don't quite know why! God bless you, darling.

Tuesday 6th June 1944
I had two wonderful hours of baseball this afternoon with Andler and Matuozzi. I used the bat as a hurling stick! A glorious moonlit night. Many letters are at Hakodate for us. God bless you, Eileen.

An 2adh araidh indin! (Translation: The second front today!)[22]

Wednesday 7th June 1944
Do you realise, young woman, that there are 14 letters in this camp for me – how I hope they are from you my darling. I can hardly wait till they are censored! I am walking on air since I heard about it. How I do love you, Eileen. God bless you.

Thursday 8th June 1944
An 2adh araidh (The 2nd front) [in Gaelic script] must be a terrific affair; everyone is happy about it. It has rained all day. There are now 20 letters for me but heaven knows when they will reach me. How I thank God for the wonderful news of letters and *an 2adh araidh* (the 2nd front) [in Gaelic script]. I may be home for Christmas yet, darling. I shall always love you. God bless you.

Friday 9th June 1944
My darling, it will take months to censor all the letters in camp – they are being done alphabetically! *An 2adh araidh* (the 2nd front) [in Gaelic script] is doing well. A glorious day with some volleyball in the afternoon. There is now no danger of a move from here for me. I am glad. God bless you, Eileen.

[22]Here and in several subsequent places Frank uses Irish (in the old-style, Gaelic script) to disguise his knowledge of events in case his letters were found. This is because the prisoners had access to a radio and were able to listen to developments in the war. The D-Day invasions of Normandy took place on 6th June 1944 and the prisoners knew about it by 8th June. The Irish entry for 6th June was probably inserted two days later when he realised what had happened. I am grateful to Angela Flynn and her mother as well as my cousin Roisín Scullion for providing translations of the Irish text.

Saturday 10th June 1944

Canteen of cigarettes and soap! There is a scheme afoot to make small cakes in camp. I had a busy day. I putt the 8lb shot 51 feet today. Andler did 40ft. The volleyball pitch is now ready. I paid the men tonight. God bless you darling.

Sunday 11th June 1944 (Yasume)

I have just returned from a terrific show "Maisie's Place" produced by Wynd and the boys. There were chorus girls, tango dancers, and an Eastern beauty! I am in love with them all. Yet I love you above all else in this world. God bless you.

Monday 12th June 1944

We started table-tennis today and I beat Andler 8 games to 1! The Japanese officer played a few games too. A glorious day but I was busy. Some letters were given out tonight. They will not be censored alphabetically now. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 13th June 1944

No letters received as yet but oh how I am longing for them to be censored. You can never know what they mean to me just now. Every Sunday will be a Yasume Day in future! The second front is going very slowly. God bless you.

Wednesday 14th June 1944

No letters yet and nothing exciting today. I had a good try out with the shot in the afternoon and did my usual 51 feet. I have great fun in the evenings going my rounds of the groups; the men like it. God bless you.

Thursday 15th June 1944

It has rained all day long and still I love you as never before. No letters issued at all today! 400 have been censored but only about 90 given out. I want to do something about it all, but am powerless. God bless you, darling.

Friday 16th June 1944

My darling, how I am longing with all my heart and soul for news of you and all at home. Some letters doled out today. God bless you.

Saturday 17th June 1944

I have seen my photograph today and it's a shocker! No letters and no news. The suspense is awful. The Tokyo party leaves on Monday. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 18th June 1944 (Yasume)

My usual hectic day running around. Had several games of volleyball. One man had a bad fracture of his arm at football. Andler gave him an anaesthetic and I reduced the fracture; it was a good job! I am reading "Hangman's Home". God bless you.

Monday 19th June 1944

My darling, it has been a glorious day. 19 British and 30 Dutch troops left at 6 a.m. for the other island. An American doctor from Hakodate is joining them. No sign of the American dentist yet. I am in love with "Hangman's House". God bless you.

Tuesday 20th June 1944
Andler and I had a terrific work-out at baseball this afternoon. Temperature is now 75°F. What a glorious night with millions of stars above. Venus away in the west made me think of you and home. God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 21st June 1944
I am reading "Without My Cloak" (Kate O'Brien). It is now well past 10 p.m. and oh I have had a hectic day with all the groups being changed around. I am still longing for another letter darling and oh how I do love and adore you, Eileen. God bless you.

Thursday 22nd June 1944
Pay day and as usual I am broke! Darling, you will have to take care of our money matters when we are married. Do you mind changing your name to Murray? Capt. Brown is due here tomorrow. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 23rd June 1944
Capt. Brown arrived today. He is half Irish-American! Low set, broad, and dark, he is a very nice chap. I had a letter from Capt. Maloney and he sent ¥10 for the sick in the camp. He was very complimentary in the note. I love you. God bless you.

Saturday 24th June 1944
My darling, we had a walk today with the Japanese doctors – it was grand and we have been promised a weekly walk from now onwards! Capt. Brown has settled down here and he loves Muroran – much better than Hakodate. God bless you.

Sunday 25th June 1944
What a hectic day it has been. Volleyball; ping pong; concert; prayers; sick parades. Andler, Brown, and I are great pals already. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 26th June 1944
My darling, rain all day and bad lumbago, but I am not in bed. Porridge and sugar + toast and sugar every night with Wynd, Andler and Brown. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 27th June 1944
The High Commandant came from Hakodate today and saw many men at interview. He brought a letter from Fr. O'Mahoney; he is trying to come here. My lumbago is much better thank God. Summer has come at last! God bless you.

Wednesday 28th June 1944
My darling, we are very optimistic nowadays about the war being over in the very near future. Still longing for your letters; very few are being censored daily. Terribly hot today and my back still aches. God bless you.

Thursday 29th June 1944
We had a 3 hour session with the colonel this evening. I asked for Catholic prayer books and gramophones + records! He has now gone back to Hakodate. The weather is glorious and everyone is optimistic. God bless you.

Friday 30th June 1944

My darling, I was in the Japanese office this morning and saw one of your letters to me! It had just been censored but heaven knows when it will reach me. It has been a dull day. Oh Eileen, my darling, surely it *must* end soon. God bless you.

Saturday 1st July 1944

Feverish activity to dig air raid trenches all over the camp today. Things must be happening nearby! A glorious night with a bright moon above. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 2nd July 1944

My darling, I sent cards to father and Gerry today. Maybe they will reach home before the end of the war! Andler had a birthday party tonight – bully sandwiches! God bless you.

Monday 3rd July 1944

I had a glorious walk in the afternoon with Andler, Brown, Wynd, and medical orderlies. We spent an hour by the sea. Broke my watch yesterday. Finished reading "Surgeon's Log". No letters. God bless you.

Tuesday 4th July 1944

Oh, my darling, I am so very happy today. I have heard that two air mail postcards have arrived in camp today for me – one from you and one from the O'Kane family; they were dated April 1944! Oh darling Eileen, you can never know the happiness that this has brought to me. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 5th July 1944

Tonight I received *six* air mail postcards! One from you, father, daddy, your family, Felix, and Father Joe[23]. Oh my own darling I am so happy and relieved to know that you are all well. I am not as worried now. I had some shot putting (48 feet) and baseball in the afternoon with Andler & Brown. God bless you.

Thursday 6th July 1944

Your cards arrived last night a few moments after we had started on our first day of the Novena to Our Lady of Fatima for a "speedy peace and reunion with our dear ones". Twenty boys are doing it with me. What comfort and joy these cards are to me. Oh my darling, surely God will end this war soon. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 7th July 1944

Do you realise, darling, how happy we shall be when we meet again? All this misery will be long forgotten in a short time. You can never know what it means to me to have real friends in your family. God bless you.

Saturday 8th July 1944

My man Paddy, had his first letter from home today. He was very thrilled about it. Your 20 odd letters have not reached me yet. However, the cards are much more up-to-date and I can wait. No excitement today. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 9th July 1944

Football, concert, boxing, long jumping, prayers, bath, biscuits, bread, toast, butter & sugar! God bless you, darling.

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[23] Father Joe is Father Joseph Murphy, a parish priest who was Eileen's uncle (brother of her mother). He officiated at Frank and Eileen's wedding and was a parish priest in Larne, Co. Antrim for many years.

Monday 10th July 1944

My darling, we had our weekly walk by the sea today *and* a swim! We had two hours of glorious sunshine, sunbathing, singing etc. The natives thought we had gone nuts! God bless you, darling.

Tuesday 11th July 1944

A big earth tremor last night. Yesterday, I had 3 big successes with lumbar punctures – got in first time. Digging air raid trenches all afternoon. No letters from you yet, Eileen. Paddy had one from his wife today. God bless you Eileen darling.

Wednesday 12th July 1944

Another "Twelfth" away from my orange brethren! It has been a glorious day. One of the men (Grant) got into trouble because he was accused of attempting to strike a guard! I had much worry about it. God bless you Eileen.

Thursday 13th July 1944

My own darling, I am so very happy tonight. I received your January 17th letter (1943). It is all so strange reading about your new work because I have no idea in the world what it may be[24]. Thank God you have found something to pass the time away. Billy McGinley was *not* taken prisoner, nor was he ever heard of in Singapore. Our novena finished tonight and I am expecting big things. God bless you always, darling.

Friday 14th July 1944

My darling, I have been reading your letter all day long and I love it more and more. Imagine Frances having a baby! How I wish I could see it all. There was a big parade this evening and I read out a pep talk to the men. Oh what tripe it all was. I am sending a barren card to father about my Red Cross number today and am not allowed to write any personal stuff – so don't be angry. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 15th July 1944

It has rained the whole day through but it has not made me sad. I never try to think about my day of liberation – it will not bear thinking about, it's so terrific. We know that Japan will never fight to a finish because our treatment has improved so much. We even think that the war will be over here *before* the European show. God grant it. God bless you, darling.

Sunday 16th July 1944

Another Yasume day is ended thank God. Very many of the men have got diarrhoea again. Concert in the hospital and boxing in the afternoon. Managed some stiff baseball with Andler this evening. God bless you.

Monday 17th July 1944

My darling, I had your March 30th 1943 letter this evening and oh how happy I am this moment. I am glad in a way that your letters are being doled out so that I can have a new thrill of joy about once a week. You seemed very depressed in your letter and I don't blame you a bit. You must be fed up waiting for worthless me. I dare not let my depression settle on me because so much depends upon my cheerfulness with the men here. I have no idea what your job has been, though I gather that you gave it up and went back to Omagh. I would have advised the same. We had a walk today and Andler and I walked at the head of the column. All the Japanese girls made eyes at us – are you very jealous, Eileen? Andler, Brown, and I are very close friends now. God bless you, Eileen.

[24] This was Eileen's job in postal censorship.

Tuesday 18th July 1944

My darling, I have been thinking today that this long letter will be very boring for you to read – I just tell you each day that I love you and ask God to bless you. And now I am going to write more in future – the paper will come from somewhere! It is a hot summer's night in the prison camp and I have just killed 6 fleas – which I always collect on my rounds of the troops in the evenings! In Malaya there were bugs; in Japan lice in winter and fleas in summer! I am sitting inside my mosquito net scantily attired, listening to the rumble of the local factory, the croaking of frogs from the surrounding swamp, and the buzzing of mosquitoes. Last night there was a terrific thunderstorm which lasted for hours. Today we were ordered to weed the garden which was duly completed in 10 minutes. In the afternoon I read all of your letters again, looked at your snaps and had my daydreams. This evening after supper I sat outside and looked up at my green hill, but my thoughts were away beyond it across Hokkaido to Vladivostok, across the Siberian wastes to you in Ireland and I found myself in Donegal again with you. All the old scenes came back again and I sang in Gaelic songs of those days. I wanted to live them all again and not waste a precious moment of our youth. God bless you.

Wednesday 19th July 1944[25]

And now my darling, it is a dull afternoon and I am writing at my table before the little statue of the Sacred Heart, on either side of which are small vases of marigolds and clover; you and Josie (R.I.P.) and Una look out at me from your pictures. You and God are ever by my side to keep my spirits up, but prison life becomes unbearable at times. I do not worry for myself but my heart bleeds for the men; the work is so very heavy, the food is deteriorating, and so many of them are weak with diarrhoea. I fear that many will die before we are set free from here. They will die next winter. How I pray to God to deliver us before then. Still the shoko screams at me to produce more workers. So each morning I have to sort out the very sick men from the sick and keep them only in the camp. The men who are sent out do not bless me but I have my duty to the serious cases. The Dutch officers are a queer lot — the least queer being the doctor. They are slowly driving Wynd, Andler, Brown, and I mad. Their verbosity (in Dutch) is terrific, besides being rude, but we never complain. Borski has broken off relations with me and does not eat with us but confines himself to his room all day! – much to our amusement and delight! He is an old man of 49. It all began last Sunday when I refused to allow our football team to play against his owing to bad weather – (the men wear rubber soled slippers). So he has forbidden all "Dutchmen" (Javanese) to play any games with the British! They are not even allowed to be in the next concert with our chaps! Oh it is all so silly and childish. You have no idea how men can act in prisoner-of-war camps. Andler, Brown, and I appear quite normal to each other but we are beginning to wonder if we are queer too?? Then Jongsma will beat his chest and cry "Oh! If I could only fly and fight again and bomb and machine-gun them!" And we smile through it all; and when he has gone we pray that the Yanks and tanks will come soon! Yet I find prison life teaches me a wondrous self-restraint. One *cannot* avoid people one does not care for – one has to stand one's ground, live with these people and be pleasant to them. Maureen and Margaret used to tell me how trying convent life was living with so many nuns of different temperaments and now I know all about it. I have to keep the peace almost to the point of sacrificing honour and then I begin to crack and become very, very hard on the other person. Andler, Brown, and I never allow the troops to come to our rooms – we know it is bad for discipline; the others ignore this golden rule and so they neither have respect nor discipline from the men. This is a wonderful camp for officers, but it is a hell camp for the men. Why do I worry you with these little details, my darling? Why do they worry me, when I have so many things to be happy about? Oh! How the war drags on and on; it seems like an eternity since I left home in 1939; and what precious years of our lives have been wasted. And yet I can see the hand of God in it all; He has shown me a philosophy of life which I have never known before. I have lost a lot in medical experience but gained a lot of experience about men and women and life. I have learned to appreciate, *really* and *truly* appreciate, home, our love, God, our religion, and the things in life that matter. It will be heaven just to see you again, Eileen. Oh!

[25] This is one of Frank's most personal diary entries, apart from his separate writings under the heading "I thought today …" (see Appendix B) which he wrote the following month.

That it were all over and we could go off together for a long, long holiday by the sea – away from everything. The agony of POW life is that awful restriction on liberty which chains one down to such a small space with never a view of wide open fields and beach and sea. That awful separation from all those whom we love; that awful daily routine that goes on without ending. Yet as an officer and a doctor I must be always cheerful – it means so much to the morale of the men. Thank God my health is good. I could spend ages thanking you and it would never be enough. And now I must give you a rest for a while. God bless you, darling.

Thursday 20th July 1944

Oh, my darling, it is still Wednesday, but I cannot sleep tonight without thanking you for yet another letter (January 1st 1943). The letter is old in date, but it is so young and fresh and full of *you*, my darling. You can never know the joy that a single letter of yours brings to me in my captivity. You are doing wonders with our bottom drawer, darling. It will be exciting when we begin comparing our treasures – I have a lot in India. Thank God you have returned to Omagh; I would have advised the same. You poor darling, I have no idea yet what kind of work you were doing in Belfast. You must have been worried about it all. Good night my darling. My darling, it is now 11.15 p.m. and I should be fast asleep in bed, but I have been writing out the Litany of the Saints for Michael Rodrigues. I have so many of your letters now that I have tied them up in blue ribbon. Oh what a priceless lovely book it makes – the sweetest reading in all the world for me, Eileen. A train rushes by in the night and I think of my train journey home to you. I still have that daydream of a train rushing northwards to Liverpool and you and I sitting side by side too full to say a word. I feel it must all end soon, though things seem so very slow in France. We all think it will surely end this year – and so do the Japanese. And now I can hear the rats playing leapfrog in the rafters above! Tomorrow is a Yasume – the factory's anniversary! I wonder shall I be free for our big anniversary on 29th December 1944? I want so very much to be back again with you and all our dear ones. I am ashamed to write so little tonight. Andler had a row with Jongsma last night and me with Lutter today! And to think that he used to spend his time conciliating *me*! I have changed your snap in the cigarette case to the more serious one; your smiling one is in the frame on my table. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 21st July 1944

Two more of your letters this afternoon (dated 14th October & Christmas Day 1942). Imagine writing to me on such a day as Christmas when you were surrounded by all your dear ones (14 of them). Here I am receiving letters from you almost every other day and poor you getting my postcards about once in 6 months. I am ashamed, but you know so well, my darling, that you would have a letter every day if it were in my power. I can only wait and send you this long letter when the war is over. It is now afternoon and I have just returned from the boxing match. There will be a big show tonight – "Follies of 1944" – it is all about a cruise to Java. And now it is 10.15 p.m. and I am under my net again to tell you how much I love you, your letters, and everything about you. If you could but know the solace, the comfort and the happiness that *one* of your letters brings to me, what a difference it makes to my captivity – then you would never ask me what you should send me. Our bottom drawer seems to be almost full up; I am dying to hear about our new dinner set. I performed quite a big operation this morning – removed a large cyst from a man's scalp under local anaesthetic – Andler refused to do it although he is said to be the surgeon of the camp. Capt. Brown complimented me on a very neat job. I am telling you this because I must lay all my successes at your feet. I did *not* forget to ask God's help before starting on it. The concert tonight was the best ever – Reuneker as a Javanese dancer was superb, de Wilde was a great comedian; the music was a treat. There were many beauties in the cast! I am studying Cecil's Medicine very hard nowadays. God bless you darling.

Saturday 22nd July 1944

A man nearly died this morning – he had acute gastro enteritis; however a quick glucose-saline transfusion saved his life. Paddy is off sick with acute diarrhoea and Magee (a Liverpool-Irish lad) will be his deputy. I have just finished reading "Bugle Ann" an American story – it's all about a dog. Darling, when are you going to buy our

new dog? If you had a small puppy now, he would be just ready for my homecoming. Oh what a day that will be, Eileen. I try to imagine it. Good night Eileen.

Sunday 23rd July 1944

Oh, my darling, how can I ever thank you enough for *6* wonderful letters which I received this evening. Oh Eileen how can I tell you how very happy I am this blessed night – coming on top of the fall of Tojo today, the greatest thing here since the war began. The dates were Sept. 22nd; October 2nd & 22nd; Nov. 29th; Dec. 4th; Dec. 21st. Each letter is a precious gem to me and I have locked them all away in my heart. I feel that I shall never be able to repay you for all this happiness which you have given to me in my captivity. I was so excited about your first letter (September) when you had just received word from the War Office about my postcard. What a relief it must have been to you all. I knew that it would make you happy to hear that I was being well treated! That was a brainwave of mine to get the card through quickly and it worked. Do you realise that not a man in this camp had a card reach home before August 1943! You and father have had a wonderful time. You were a marvel to spread the good news to all our friends and relatives. Thank God your mind was put at rest so soon. Imagine you hearing from Mrs. McLaughlin – heaven alone knows where her husband is tonight away in the wilds of Thailand or Burma. Darling, I am not as good as Frank Kennedy would make you believe – he had a *grádh* (love) for me when I was at the Mater. There were 3 famous Franks in vogue then – Kennedy, Duff, and yours truly; we all loved our work and made a great trio (I, the least of the lot!).

Letters: June 25, July 18, August 5, 14, Sept. 22, Oct. 2, 14, 22, Nov. 29, Dec. 4, 14, 21, 25, 1943 Jan. 3, 17, March 31; Postcards 1st April 1944.

I was not so very happy in those days. My happiest memories were of long walks over the hills with Frank Duff and Violet Benson – the latter was very fond of the three Franks too! I cannot imagine Frances having a baby but she will make a wonderful little mother. Oh if I could only see you all again. Please God it will be soon. The war might be over in the Far East long before the European War. Thank you, darling, for the wonderful birthday letter which you sent me. You will be a wonderful help to me with your first-aid. I hope you do not give the answers which I got from V.A.D.s when I examined them in First Aid in Rawalpindi! Darling I am so glad that you are now going to dances – it is so much better for you in every way. Tonight we are all talking of going home via America – maybe you will meet me there darling. You must have had an awful time watching and waiting for news of me; your health was wretched and you were miserable. Thank God that awful period is over for us both; I was worried sick about you, because I knew you would be worrying about me. And now I must say goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 24th July 1944

My own darling, the reaction has set in today and I am lonely again and missing you as never before. We had a pleasant walk to the sea shore in the afternoon. I have had too much time to think today and realise what I am missing when I read your letters all about weddings and babies and happy families. Both of our clans come from Derry originally. I am so very, very proud of being Irish. Please note how the Japs describe my character on my identification papers "Great faith, but sometimes lack harmony; eager for business but no humour!" How do you like me now? Wynd is just "good & cooperative"; Andler is "mild and prudent". God bless you my darling.

Tuesday 25th July 1944

My own darling, yet another letter from you this evening. It was sent on February 10th 1943 and makes another addition to my precious bundle tied in blue. As usual it has made me very happy. I wonder what my father would have done without you -– you have been so good to him in trekking all the way to Beechwood every week. His two big problems are very easily answered if I could only send my advice right away – I want him to sell the shop

immediately and to make his will now – I am willing to be an executor in his will. These years are not really wasted Eileen; I have learned so much about happiness and misery; about want and luxury; about colossal dinners and banquets in India – and a plate of rice in Japan; I have known the extreme heat of India (120°F) and the extreme cold of Japan (15F below zero); I have known the drought and dust storms of India's plains and the torrential rains of tropical Malaya; I have seen the glory of the rising sun in Japan and the beauty of its setting in India and Malaya; I have been a glutton and have been hungry; I have loved the freedom of wide open spaces and loathed the bondage of a small prison camp; I have seen happy homes like Paul and Mary's and also many unhappy homes; I have seen virtue and kindness in the far East and I have seen abominations and cruelty too; I have seen cleanliness and filth; I have met heroes and ten times as many cowards (men don't like dying much); I have met unselfish men in prison camps and twenty times as many selfish ones; I have known good soldiers and officers but twenty times as many bad ones – they were only bad according to my standards. White men are not fit to live in the Far East; they do more harm than good by their bad example. Maybe I have grown cynical in my old age! A mosquito net is a wonderful thing! – see what I have written sitting on my bed 'neath its flowing white protection. Good night my own darling. God bless you.

Wednesday 26th July 1944

Untold thousands of letters are still pouring into camp – maybe we'll receive them when the war is over. It will all end much quicker in the Far East than anyone in Britain thinks – these people are near to the end of their tether! We are making all kinds of plans for going home via America. Maybe I'll meet your relatives there and maybe I'll meet you there and be married to you there. Oh Eileen wouldn't it be wonderful if it were all over before Christmas *and* it is very possible at the rate things are happening out here. All our dreams would be realised. I had a wonderful walk around Dublin with you last night in my dreams – it was so real that I was amazed to wake up and find it all a dream. I could almost cry with disappointment on such occasions, but alas men never cry and maybe it hurts more when one cannot shed a tear. I had two very successful lumbar punctures yesterday morning which I forgot to tell you about. I am now a specialist on this job now! A Red Cross blanket has been stolen and sold outside by one of the men and the Japanese have demanded that it be produced by tomorrow evening or else …! Oh my darling, this is something which is breaking my heart and I must tell you about it. There has been no Mass in camp during the past 6 months – what an awful loss this is to me because I *love* Mass and Communion above all else in my prison life. It has brought such comfort and consolation to me when I was depressed and ill in the past – and now I have only prayer to depend upon. Andler thinks your picture is very pretty. God bless you darling.

Thursday 27th July 1944

Here I am under my snow white canopy writing to my best girl again. Darling, yet another letter came this evening (Oct. 29th) – my total is now 17 letters and one air mail card! How can you imagine what prison life is like – what it is like to be here and separated from you? Maybe you have some idea of the comfort and happiness your letters bring to me. I was feeling depressed this afternoon and so I read through all your letters and the card and lo! and behold! my blues had gone and I was happy again. When 90% of the men come and tell me how weak they are and oh so hungry and what can I say to them except – "It won't be long now". That does not give strength in their legs and fill their stomachs – and it only depresses me to see them and hear their tale of woe *and* feel so helpless. I have had a trying day what with endless streams of sick men and the stolen blanket and me eating Dutch swill and grovelling for Dutch scraps and refuse! Thank God your health is improving and that you are taking long walks – I love walking. May God bless you and keep you this night, Eileen.

Friday 28th July 1944

My own darling, I had my precious watch back today complete with winder and new cog-wheel. You will love it as much as I do when you see it. Repairs cost ¥7.50. We think the war will be over before the end of the year –

"soon maybe not tomorrow". I am reading a thriller "One Man's Secret" – it's poor stuff. The new Red Cross books have come and oh they are good to see. God bless you, darling.

Saturday 29th July 1944

My darling, things are becoming more and more critical in camp as the days go by; the men are becoming weaker and weaker and I can only stand and wait – it is my sole way of serving. I have got a heartbreaking job to do and not an enviable one. Letters were issued tonight but none for me darling; but I must be patient and not complain – I have had my share recently. I am reading "Kim" just now (one of the new Red Cross books). We have also got "Stonewall Jackson" this week too. Thank God the men have a rest tomorrow – they need it. We have heard that the Yanks have landed in the islands north of this island – it is thrilling. God bless you.

Sunday 30th July 1944

This has indeed been a Yasume Day – no games, no concert, nothing but prayers and a bath! Capt. Brown had short notice to move back to Hakodate early tomorrow morning. I am very sorry he is leaving us; I liked him very much and we got on famously together. His home is in Council Bluffs, Iowa and we are invited to visit him there when we are on our honeymoon! God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 31st July 1944

My darling, another letter this evening from you and dated *April* 6th 1943. The news was wonderful – you still love me! Thank God you had promised to go back to Omagh again; you will be much happier there at your real vocation. I have not yet discovered what you have been working at during all these months. Surely it is not a factory! Mammie was very kind to send me a note too and sign it "mother" – you have no idea how much that means to me. Darling you *must* have your photograph taken and placed beside mine at Beechwood in the drawing room! I wonder what "Malayan Postscript" is all about. I have finished "Kim" and am reading "Garden of Resurrection" (Thurston). God bless you Eileen.

Tuesday 1st August 1944

My darling, your wandering boy tonight is now under his white flowing canopy writing another bit of love and oh! how weary the time becomes – waiting and waiting for it all to finish. At this moment and always I can never consider what the end will be like – it is too big a thing to think about. How on earth can you think of living with me for the rest of your life, Eileen. I am an odd person and I will try your patience very much at times. I am dull but quixotic; I am generous and mean; I am cruel and kind; I am bad and good. Why won't you have your photograph taken and stand beside me in the drawing room at Beechwood. I am reading "The Master of Jalna" (de la Roche) – not bad. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 2nd August 1944

My own darling, there have been terrific preparations for air raids – complete black outs from now onwards, troops with fixed bayonets dashing all over the place. We are all terribly excited and are looking forward to the arrival of "the boys" overhead. The weather is marvellous by day and lovely moons at night! There were letters given out tonight but none from you my dearest one. The Colonel from Hakodate is here and is interviewing the lads daily. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 3rd August 1944

My darling, this has been an eventful day. It began with two terrific sick parades followed by Dutch spinal injections. Poor Dr Lutter was in bad form and messed them all up – Andler and I had to do them all between us. Then Lutter and I were interviewed by two Japanese press when in the presence of the High Commandant. I gave them an earful of woe about the frightful state of the men's health (British), about the poor food and the hard

work. They were all furious but I *had* to do my duty. I spoke of the improvements and about the awful beatings before the Colonel arrived. It may cost me a lot but I *had* to do it. I had a shot putting practice in the afternoon followed by a sun bath. *Then* came a hot and cold shower; sick parades, supper, vitamins; bed. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 4th August 1944
The usual blackout – guns mounted all over the place – so here's hoping. There are millions of mosquitoes buzzing around and it is almost dark. I have been busy all day long. I am having a big showdown with the Japanese colonel tomorrow about the health of the British troops. God bless you. Pray for me. I have diarrhoea and stomach pains again – like hundreds of others here. Good night.

Saturday 5th August 1944
What awful writing I have been doing in the darkness – and now there is no blackout tonight. Sgt. Newlands, a Hurricane pilot, has made me a beautiful cherry pipe with his initials on it. He is a nice lad – a New Zealander. We have had our interview with the colonel today. I appealed again for the sick and he insists that no sick or weak men be sent out to work. It was a wonderful victory for me, no matter what the cost. None of the others said a word to support me. We can use the rations now as we wish – cook them how we like. I now see how very near to the end of the war we must be. We had porridge and sugar two mornings in succession! God bless you.

Sunday 6th August 1944
Another quiet Yasume day. No letters tonight because his lordship was too lazy to deliver any. We had a concert this evening at the hospital and it was a big success. I had a few shot putts this afternoon against some hefty Dutch lads and I won easily! Listen to my boasting again! The weather continues gloriously fine. The Japanese are getting ready for one last big push to try and stem the tide against them. Many of the guards are being called up again. Please God it will be all over before the end of the year. God bless you Eileen.

Monday 7th August 1944
More letters tonight but alas there were none for me. Poor Wynd had one from his fiancée to say that she had called it all off! God bless you Eileen. Not well tonight.

Tuesday 8th August 1944
No letters tonight and oh! I am feeling blue. The news about France came as a great surprise. I pray that nothing will happen to Mattie at La Tour now that Brittany has been cut off. You must be all very anxious about her. Thank God the last stages of the war are now at hand and we'll all be united once again. Thank God I have some more letters to come. May He bless you.

Wednesday 9th August 1944
We become more and more optimistic as the days go by. These people are scared stiff of air raids while we look forward to them with glee – at least they should relieve the monotony. God knows that life can be very dull in a prison camp. No letters tonight at all and that does not help. God bless you.

Thursday 10th August 1944
I am becoming more and more impatient for freedom and home and you, as the days go by. Oh if I could only see you just for a moment and tell you all. God bless you.

Friday 11th August 1944

Darling, I have started a new scheme – every day I now write down my thoughts "I THOUGHT TODAY"[26]. It is for you, Eileen, but I am afraid it will bore you stiff. I dreamed about my mother (R.I.P.) last night and it was a lovely dream. Darling, isn't it very wonderful that it should be her dying wish that we should be married; and more wonderful that it should happen so quickly after her death. Ah! how I wish you had known her and Josie and Charlie. The weather has broken at last and rain is beginning. God bless you

Saturday 12th August 1944

My darling, I was so very disappointed tonight when no letter came for me. I would give anything for a letter in my present mood – not to mention any mood. My thoughts today were about freedom and I have written them all down for you. My own darling, another Sunday is coming and still there is no Mass for us here. And just now I have the wonderful news that I am allowed to write you a letter and send you my photograph. Rained all day – but who cares? God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 13th August 1944

My own darling, we all prayed so very hard for peace today in our little chapel. We feel that it will be over soon, please God. Mattie must be having an awful time just now with the war so near her. I spent a quiet hour in the misty evening dreaming on my little hillock of grass. We had a wonderful concert with Carmen de Wilde as the star performer. We had porridge and sugar for supper! And now more dreaming. God bless you.

Monday 14th August 1944

Darling, I killed a snake this afternoon up on the football pitch. It seemed quite a harmless creature and I really felt sorry for its 3 feet of writhing muscle. No letters at all this evening. Our garden is beautiful now and I have a constant supply of flowers for my little Sacred Heart statue. We become more and more optimistic as each day dawns – it is always a day nearer freedom. God bless you, darling.

Tuesday 15th August 1944 (The Assumption)

My darling, a glorious day and I have been feeling much better *and* my blues have gone for another while! I am now reading "Finch's Fortune" (de la Roche). I shall be reading "Dreams" (Boyd) very soon. How I hope that letter reaches you soon Eileen. I wonder what you will think of my P.O.W. photograph; I look a sight in my blanket coat! Had tomatoes last night! Have been promised lots more tomorrow – 2 loaves of bread! Porridge and sugar tonight. You must pity the poor prisoners. God bless you.

Wednesday 16th August 1944

Imagine, five huge tomatoes + 2 loaves! Imagine me writing a love letter about food to you, darling! Still it means so much to a P.O.W. in Japan who has boiled rice three times a day for 2 ½ years! I am in terrific form these days in spite of the tales of woe I listen to all day long. You should see my new vases full of flowers (phlox) – Paddy has again been a wonder once again. He insists that I read a dreadful book called "Sweethearts of the Air"! Michael Rodrigues dislocated his shoulder this morning at work and I fixed it up again. God bless you, darling.

Thursday 17th August 1944

My own darling, we are all in good form nowadays as cannes, nice and toulon have been landed upon[27]. The poor old gerrys are hard pressed now but I cannot feel very sorry about them. I have been thinking today that I must have a very balanced mind or I would have gone crazy long ago as a doctor in this camp. The sickness rate is colossal at present since a minor epidemic of influenza had broken out. I love you. God bless you, Eileen.

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[26] See Appendix B.

[27] Frank is deliberately avoiding capital letters to disguise the locations associated with the liberation of France.

Friday 18th August 1944

Darling, the Japanese interpreter told me good news today – that there are many letters still waiting for me! All the officers at Hakodate (surplus) are being sent to an officers' camp down south. They asked for volunteers from here but the only one keen to go is Lutter. There was a heavy earth tremor tonight. I am still busy killing fleas! All are talking of home today – even the Japanese. Pray God peace comes soon *because* my paper is nearly finished. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 19th August 1944

My darling, I am in grave danger of being sent away south to an officers' camp – all because I have stood up to these people *always* and *always* for the cause of the men. I have never curried favour from anyone and never asked a thing for myself or any officer – it was always the men I thought of, especially the weak ones. Now I do not mind going because I have done my job here to the best of my ability and the war will soon be over. I dreamed of Capt. Maloney last night and as he came in the door I said to Andler "Here comes a real soldier"! We gave a plasma transfusion to Richards, a bad dysentery case today. God bless you.

Sunday 20th August 1944

My darling, I love you so very much tonight. I have spent a quiet evening with you up on my grassy hillock – wondering what you and all at home were doing; longing to see you and to meet all your people. No word about any move as yet but I expect to hear something tomorrow. God bless you.

Monday 21st August 1944

Lots of letters tonight, but none for me. One man got 19! Paddy got 9 from his wife. Oh my darling, I would give anything for a letter tonight but I'll have to be content with reading one of the old ones or them all. paris is surrounded and they are on the outskirts fighting. Oh what a terrific horde of men we have there now. One nip said today that the war would be all over in three months from now. If I knew that this were true I would jump for joy. Please God the end will come soon. God bless you.

Tuesday 22nd August 1944

Last night the camp was punished and kept out of bed till 11 p.m. because a blanket was stolen – I had a glorious time sitting dreaming up on my grassy hillock under the stars! Andler and I had a discus try out today and I won easily. A glorious day. God bless you.

Wednesday 23rd August 1944

My darling, Wynd and I have had a rumour that either of us will be leaving soon. We are writing a letter to the Colonel protesting about any move of this kind. It has worried us quite a bit though I am philosophical about it – "if I am sent, then I am sent". God bless you.

Thursday 24th August 1944

My own darling, I am much happier. Wynd and I had an interview with the commandant and he said there is nothing definite about a move from this camp. I have just spent a pleasant autumn evening up on my hillock; there is a good breeze blowing and oh! how I longed for a walk. If I were at home now, we should be walking over Cave Hill, with the wind in our faces. Darling, you would love it. The men in camp had decided to protest to the Japanese if Wynd or I were moved! God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 25th August 1944
It is an ideal night to be out of doors. I prayed so hard to God to bless our love, our marriage, and our home; I asked Him to send me home to you very soon. Good night and God bless you.

Saturday 26th August 1944 (Yasume)
It has been a terrible day in every way – rained in torrents without ceasing and one of the men died of dysentery. Only six men turned up to prayers in the afternoon. I have been busy all the day long and depressed too in spite of the terrific tidings. Oh my darling, at long last the end is in sight after five long years of war. Good night and God bless you, darling.

Sunday 27th August 1944
My darling, my usual hectic day. I have finished reading another trilogy "Captain Horatio Hornblower" (C.S. Forester) – it's a wonderful story of the sea in Napoleon's time. I had a grand discus practice all to myself this afternoon. I am now in good health, thank God. God bless you.

Monday 28th August 1944
Went to the crematorium today and spent a long time in the temple. You would be fascinated with the golden Buddha and the eerie atmosphere of the place. The faint aroma of incense; the priests robes etc. were not unlike our own. I had some shot and discus practice in the afternoon. I am actually improving. I have quite a gallery of Japanese kids up on the hill watching me. The officers all had 1lb "butta" each today. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 29th August 1944
My darling, I am so disappointed tonight – lots of letters but none came for me. I have been dreaming about India today and all the lovely things I must buy for you should I ever have the chance – a real sari, a pair of golden India slippers with curved toes, Kashmir silk bed spreads, tea sets, carved work boxes, cigarette boxes, jade statuettes, Buddhas, cigarette cases etc., etc! I want so much to give you *everything* that is beautiful in the East. Had a field day in the afternoon with shot and discus. Dreaming of Bundoran again with you, Eileen. God bless you, darling.

Wednesday 30th August 1944
The crematorium was destroyed by fire yesterday and so we had to collect the body of Richards in a lorry and take it to Muroran proper to the crematorium there. Andler and I rode on the truck with Matuozzi and Comber. We went all along the coast road and oh it was lovely. We saw a Ainu woman on the beach, completely naked to the waist and a huge moustache tattooed across her upper lip. We were objects of wonder to the natives in the town. A very striking Buddhist priest met us at the crematorium; he had on a surplice and stole, and had a deep bass voice. There were monks all over the place, sitting in deep meditation on the graves. The crematorium was on top of a little hill that ran steeply down to a pretty little cove. It was a lovely sight to see the blue Pacific down below us and accompanied by the dull tolling of the temple bell, it was perfect. There were several cremations and the monks were chanting all kinds of weird things. Little bowls of rice before each coffin and incense burning – all so very Eastern. Then to see the funny little gnome of a man in charge of the actual cremation – he was bald, had bleary eyes, and a squeaky voice. He bowed deeply from the hips when we left him. It is quite a big town but nothing in it. They don't have much fun in these parts. It was sad to see a playground full of young boys all dressed in uniform and being regimented at such an early age. It was a wonderful experience. We came back a short cut through the factory – it is a terrific size and does turn out a lot of finished iron goods. No letters today. The colonel is expected tomorrow and some Red Cross officials are expected too! God bless you, darling.

Thursday 31st August 1944

The Colonel did not come but a man from the Swiss consulate (Ballard) came early this afternoon from Tokyo. He was accompanied by many Japanese officials. He had a sore throat and so I had to see him before the official interview. He was a little fair-haired, blue-eyed, pink-faced, bald man dressed in shorts and open shirt; spoke English with a slight foreign accent; very pleasant and took a keen interest in everything. I praised the camp a lot – accommodation, recreation, hospital, medicines. When asked about the health, I said the health of British troops was very poor indeed; that they did all the hard work etc. When asked about the religious services I said they were unsatisfactory to me and the other Catholics in camp because we have not had a priest in 6 months. He said that was a difficult problem. He said that Red Cross supplies would soon be sent to this camp; also medicines. Andler complained about the poor health of the British troops, the poor food; Wynd casually mentioned about boots! I also complained about the men's food, the letters, and postcards. He admired our quarters very much. He has father's name and address and says he will cable a message to him that he has seen me recently well and alive. God bless you.

Friday 1st September 1944

I have been shivering all evening; temperature 102°F. So I am in for something tonight! I am off to bed early in anticipation. It has been a quiet day after yesterday's hectic time – everyone seems to be on holiday. God bless you.

Saturday 2nd September 1944 (Anne's Birthday)

I had a terrible night. Sheets and blankets are soaked with perspiration. Just managed to crawl out to the morning sick parade. Then went to bed till 2 p.m. and had more sick parades and hospital rounds. Strangely enough Andler has the same fever as I have. Paddy plied us with tea all morning. Temperature now normal, thank God, but we feel very weak. God bless you.

Sunday 3rd September 1944 (Yasume Day)

Darling this is the 5th Anniversary of the war and it is still going strong in spite of the end being in sight. It has been a busy day. Andler and I diagnosed and cured three hysteria & malingering cases today – two of them were paralysed! Only two more days to the big day and things will become difficult perhaps for us. I was "on the mat" today because of my remarks to the consul chap, but I stuck to my guns. We had a glorious concert tonight – a tour of the world. Sgt. Murphy sang for Ireland "Rose of Tralee" and "Flannagan's Band". There was a Highland Fling, a Spanish Toreador; a Chinese dancer in "Shanghai Rhumba"; a Cuban dance; Welsh songs (in Welsh). During the Toreador song I kissed a marigold and flung it to Senor de Wilde who went into raptures over it. His bullfight was superb. At the beginning and end of the Highland Fling one of the dancers turned to me and saluted (it is the custom in Scottish regiments). Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 4th September 1944

My darling, this has been a depressing day. Oh! how I have longed for you to come to me in my captivity and yet I know that you are always by my side. There are difficult days ahead and I am worried about the men and wondering will my health get better than it is now. One man got 26 letters tonight and I got none, but that is an honour to be punished by the Japanese in this way. God bless you Eileen darling.

Tuesday 5th September 1944

Oh! what a day. Andler and I have spent two hours since 8 p.m. on another hysterical paralysis case (Price) and we are exhausted[28]. The man is able to walk now! And now this evening british are in mons and it will all be over soon. Darling, all our dreams will really soon come true. God bless you dearest Eileen.

[28] The "cure" consisted of Frank and Max beating the patients until they walked.

Wednesday 6th September 1944
It has been another rainy day and another paralysis case, which we speedily cured. I am reading "Three Harbours" by van Wyck Mason (American). Another disappointment tonight – 96 letters and not a one for me. We have had secret information that the Japanese doctor is due tomorrow on a surprise visit. God bless you.

Thursday 7th September 1944
The doctor came from Hakodate today and upset our applecart a bit. I said that there would be many more deaths in this camp and I would not be responsible while the men were asked to do such heavy work, on poor food, and being so weak. My darling, I shall be sending you and father a postcard each tomorrow. Please God the war will be over soon. God bless you.

Friday 8th September 1944
My own darling, we have been working from early morning till late tonight with Dr Shiba[29]. It has been a terrific strain and oh! what excitement there was in camp about the twerp! Andler and I expect to be moved from here at any time – and we are expecting it in the dead of night. I know so well in my heart and soul that it will be all over so very soon. Darling, it does not bear thinking about it. I sent the cards off today on their long journey. God bless you Eileen.

Saturday 9th September 1944
My darling, another hectic day. We had a trip out to the works today and saw the men at work. It is all very heavy stuff. This guy from below is driving us crazy here. We had a quiet hour by the sea with the camp workers yesterday afternoon. It was so refreshing and peaceful after so long in camp. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 10th September 1944
Oh! what a Yasume Day – poured rain all day long. I paraded 85 weak men for inspection by the Japanese doctor, and at last he was impressed with the weakness of the British troops. We had a lecture from him about the treatment of the sick! I remember his recent treatment of them – beating them with a stick as they stood shivering in the snow for two hours! God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 11th September 1944
My darling, another terrific day with the Japanese doctor. He was buzzing around everywhere, and interfering. The shoko had a session with Wynd, Lutter, Borski and me about the men. He said we had no authority to punish any of our men. So we decided Borski and I *never* to hand any cases over to them to be dealt with. Oh! how I have longed for freedom and you, dearest Eileen, to be away from this awful prison life. God bless you darling.

Tuesday 12th September 1944
My own darling, no letters again for me tonight. Many of your letters have been censored but are being held up by the powers above for spite, *because* I am doing my duty by *my* men and standing up for them. Oh! how weary I am of all this. Unfortunately or maybe fortunately I am more than a medical officer. I have *all* the responsibilities of the men on my shoulders – Wynd will not have anything to do with discipline, so I have all the dirty jobs. If I had not taken over command, Wynd would have been under Borski's thumb, because of his rank – so British troops would have been at the mercy of the Dutch. As things stand we are independent of them. And on top of all this are many weak men to be watched; continual visits to the office etc. Oh! how I admire you darling. God bless you, Eileen.

[29] This is Tsutomi Shiba who was accused of beating the prisoners in Frank's war crimes' affidavit (see Appendix A).

Wednesday 13th September 1944

My darling, another day nearer to you and freedom. I have tried to imagine what my feelings will be like when I am informed that I am free again, but alas it is too big a thing to even consider for a moment. There are chinese prisoners now working at the factory under armed guards; they appear to be very fed up with life. I have calculated that the war will be over on November 24th this year – otherwise I shall have no more paper. God bless you.

Thursday 14th September 1944

Now I must read your letters once again! And now it is evening and I am ready to hop into bed under my net. Winter is coming again and so is the cold. God bless you.

Friday 15th September 1944

My own darling, I have had an awful gnawing at my heart and a yearning to see you again. Just now I am gazing at your little snap on my table. How that little Dublin brooch souvenir brings back memories to me. I can never forget going into that little shop in Talbot St. with Brendan Murray. He thought I was crazy, but he knew who my purchases were for. Nothing exciting today save my dreams. I have reached Abbottabad in my war diary. God bless you, darling.

Saturday 16th September 1944

Rained all day again and things have been dull. More letters tonight but none for me. I am not expecting any letters until I am free again, but I do not mind because I have done my job and my duty in this camp. It would make me so very happy to have another letter from you, darling, but I would rather go without it than kow tow to his nibs and neglect my duty. It is a big sacrifice but I know you would not love me if I took the easy way out and sit back here and do nothing or say nothing in defence of the men here – especially the weak ones. As a result of my efforts 19 weak men have been kept in camp and allowed to do *no* work. They will be sent to Hakodate for special treatment. Many other weaklings are being given light jobs. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 17th September 1944

Darling, I have had another triumph today. A phone call came from Hakodate (the Colonel Emoto) ordering 30 more of our men to work only ½ day and in easy work! Surely it has been worth my while trying to do something about the men's weak state and the heavy work. Now I am contented – the men will hold out for a few more months till the war is over. No Yasume for me today, as some of the men were working and a night party was out again. There was a grand concert tonight. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 18th September 1944

My darling, at last father's letter has arrived. He seems to have felt very happy on hearing that I was still alive and well. I was so glad to hear from him in a letter and I hope God will spare him until I reach home again. I want so much to see him again. He cannot be particularly proud of me for having been away from home so much and making a fool of myself so often. I have neglected him very much in the past but please God it will not be so in the future. A terrific gale today. A laboratory man from American Navy (Mr Sterling, a W.O.) arrived this evening to do 10 days work. He was captured in Guam early in the war. He is old but a good chap. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 19th September 1944

My darling, Canadian Red Cross food parcels came today. We got one small parcel among four men. A little tea, sugar, powdered milk, prunes, raisins, chocolate, biscuits, butter, jam, bully beef, salmon, mince roll, cheese – all in minute quantities. The men are very happy with these little luxuries. A little Red Cross clothing also came and a few boots. Our 19 weak men went to Hakodate today quite suddenly. They all thanked me for *all* I had done

for them – and I had done nothing. I have had a longing for a parcel from you, darling; just something that came from your dear self – handkerchiefs or socks or anything. God bless you.

Wednesday 20th September 1944

My own darling, six letters from you this evening and one from Gerry! Oh if I could only tell you how happy I am and yet so sad to think of all the worry I am causing you. Your letters were sent on Nov. 18th, Feb. 3rd & 19th; April 15; May 31; June 7th (the latest) – total now 25 letters. It is hopeless trying to tell you what those 25 letters mean to me in terms of happiness and love. Gerry has made me happy too because of his high opinion of you, Eileen; "I think she is very nice and just the type of girl for you" – and I rely very much on Gerry's judgement. Imagine Billy McGinley at Changi and I never met him. Tote must have been very relieved to hear that he was safe. I was so happy about Frances' first baby boy – she will make a grand little mother. I still don't know what kind of work you were doing in Belfast and I am curious about it even though you are teaching again. I am looking forward to reading "Malayan Postscript". Thank God you are getting around a lot to Carnalea, Killough, Bangor, Ballynahinch – golfing and gallivanting. I was thrilled to hear that you had met Dr. Macsherry's sisters Mrs. Bell and Mrs. Collings at Downpatrick. You seem to cover a lot of ground on that bicycle. Thank God you are getting around so much – even the Hightown walk with father. Some day soon we shall do that walk together. Darling, I loved your idea of coming out to India to me to be married – it would save a lot of time and you would love the East – for a while! Alas I shall not be my own master and will have to go where I am sent. If you could only meet Paul and Mary and Fr. O'Donohue in India. Nothing very exciting in Japan nowadays and nothing here. I am dependent upon dreams and your letters for all my excitement. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 21st September 1944

Darling, I have read all your letters today and oh how my heart has gone out to you. How on earth you managed to write such cheerful letters during those awful early months I do not know – I just could not have done it, Eileen. Gerry tells me that you were distracted with worry and foreboding. Your recent letters were even more cheerful – oh it is so hard to write letters to someone for 18 months and never get a word of reply. I have such a terrific lot to tell you when I get home again – all my story will be for your ears and yours only. Please God that day is not far distant now. God bless you, darling.

Friday 22nd September 1944

My own darling, I have now got 27 letters and one postcard from you to date. This evening's two letters were dated January 11th and June 21st. Oh if only you could see how happy your letters have made me. At last your whole story is now fixed together and I know that you have been a temporary Civil Servant in Belfast for several months before going back to Omagh. It was a wise thing to have a year at home away from teaching. I think you would have gone crazy in Omagh during the bad months. Thank heavens both Philip and Anne are at home again with father – they should never have left him. There has been no excitement today at all. We have now got four diagnosed cases of amoebic dysentery. I must have a test tomorrow. My blood sedimentation rate was 2mm which could not be better and is a good indication that my rheumatism is not active now. Andler and I have a rough time with our new assistant, Sterling; he is getting on Andler's nerves but *nothing* can get on my nerves. Thank God I can now get on with people whom I dislike intensely – I could never do that before I became a prisoner. Nowadays I *could not* sulk even. Goodnight & God bless you Eileen.

Saturday 23rd September 1944

My darling, Andler has seen more letters for me in the office and they are from Omagh! These letters must be quite late in 1943 as you only went back to school in September. It is wonderful to think that more of your letters are awaiting me in the near future – they will keep me alive during these last few months of the war. Please God it will be all over soon. I have really no friend here in whom I can confide (as I would in Gerry) – no friend except

our good Lord and you. If I could only describe how lonely I feel at times. Darling, I don't think I would like to practice in Belfast; I would prefer the country or the seaside and I know in my heart that you would too. We could visit Belfast on occasions. We would be happier in a quiet place. Yes, darling, we could be married out East, provided I have to stay out here several months before demobilisation. You would love the mystic east and all its charms, and it would be a glorious holiday, honeymoon, and reunion. If I am in India, I think Kashmir would be ideal for us for a honeymoon. The event of the day – a 3 ½ cwt pig was killed today, but we haven't seen much of it yet. Have you bought our dog get darling? Good night (11 p.m.) and God bless you.

Sunday 24th September 1944

Darling, I have just finished writing a 200 word letter to you – it is now 10.30 p.m. I am using both my cards for you this month. Air mail is now sent via trans-Siberian railway from Vladivostok, and only takes a few months. It has been a glorious Yasume Day. We had some baseball today in the afternoon. About 300 letters given out today. We had 3 lovely cakes for canteen – also sardines on toast for breakfast, pork stew at lunch, and nasi goreng for supper! God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 25th September 1944

Darling, I forgot to tell you that Wynd had a letter from his fiancée, Helen, yesterday saying that she had married another man! Everyone in camp knows about it, alas. I am reading "New Silent Friends" (Richard King). "It is so much nicer to sit quietly in the half darkness dreaming of what-might-have-been, what has been, and what yet may be". Our home is having its foundations built during these awful days for us. God bless you Eileen.

Tuesday 26th September 1944

My own darling, 10 letters and 1 postcard from you this morning and a card from father. Oh how happy I am this night and I thank God for all his goodness to us both. The dates are September 13th, 20th, Oct. 3rd; Nov. 5th, 14th, 27th; Dec. 4th, 20th; 1944 January 13th, Feb. 12th, 27th; father's was sent on Jan. 31st 1944. Darling, all your letters are now 25 words and it must be a trial writing them, but I love them all because they are from your own sweet self. Gerry's wedding was a surprise. Darling they will all soon be married except us. I should love to meet Frances' son and heir. Darling, were you *really* holidaying at Portstewart in mid-January and cycling the Antrim coast in mid-February? Thank God you like the things that I like – it is so very important to us. God bless you darling.

Wednesday 27th September 1944

My own darling, I have read your letters twice today and though they bring me such great happiness, yet they make me a bit homesick. Poor father must be having a rough time with his facial neuralgia again. He was very bad last time he had it. We are having (at least I am) hectic times and rows with the local lsehae, but I will not be brow-beaten by anyone. Glorious weather. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 28th September 1944

My darling, I am writing this in bed as it is too cold to sit in my room and do it. We have sat all day crouched around our charcoal fire shivering. There is a wave of optimism sweeping the camp at present and it is not without good reason. Darling, I have been dreaming today about our future when we are married. The big problem will be whether to settle down in Beechwood, have a practice on Oldpark as well and just build up a new practice or buy a country practice, or join up with Felix if he is doing well. There are many advantages to having a partnership which I have learned about, and few disadvantages with two men who like each other and trust each other. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 29th September 1944

My own darling, another letter in bed, but not so cold. I had a lovely letter from you tonight, dated July 25th. You had just returned from Kilkeel from your 5-day retreat and you felt wonderful. We were interviewed by the Colonel today. All is well. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 30th September 1944

My darling, I am now reading "Rebuilding a Lost faith" by an American agnostic (John L. Stoddard) – P.J. Kennedy & Sons, New York. It makes wonderful reading. I am very restless recently, maybe because the end is in sight. I have guessed two more months. It is obvious that these people will pack in the same time as the jerry! I cannot bear to think about the end of things, of our journey south to a port, and then across the sea to you my beloved one away in my beloved Ireland. I am writing this over the charcoal fire in the Mess – all the others are in bed. Nothing much happened today. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 1st October 1944

Darling, it is a good thing, in a way, that I went to war. It will not do any harm to the Catholic cause in Northern Ireland, to have had Catholics doing something in this war. If the Germans had won the war, I shudder to think what might have happened to you, to Ireland, to our religion, to our homes, to our dear ones by this time. Some day our people will realise all of this; they *must* realise it.[30] Today has been cold and dull in every way. I have been reading your letters again. God bless you, darling. Good night.

Monday 2nd October 1944

I have been reading your letters again in bed tonight. I should have died of despair if they had not come. They are the only bright spot in my life here and oh what consolation they can bring me. You must be all thrilled at home with the end of the war in sight. The big problem is – will these people give in when Germany collapses? I now think they will carry on a while longer. The British boys working out-of-doors have now got wonderful American hand-knit sweaters (polo necks) – and *I* insisted on it because all the Dutch have easy jobs indoors. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 3rd October 1944

I had a glorious walk this afternoon out to the gardens with 20 men – they carried back hay for the camp cow which is due very soon. We had a belated canteen of two cakes and cigarettes. I am reading Father Brown again, also "Jimmy Glover". God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 4th October 1944

My own darling, many more letters tonight but none came for me. Several of the lads have had snaps in their letters – please God I shall soon have another snap of you, Eileen. I shall be sending postcards to you and father tomorrow. We now get up at 6 a.m. and have lights out at 8.30 p.m.! Darling, you must not expect me to keep such good hours when we are married, but I am "agin" sitting up after midnight. Eileen, I am unhappy nowadays though I shouldn't be. God bless you darling.

Thursday 5th October 1944

My own darling, I have written cards to you and father today. I heard that another 1944 letter is in camp for me but has not been censored yet. I am dying to see your snap – the one you promised to send. Winston says the war will be over this year but he only refers to the European war. I wonder when this war out here will end? I am

[30] Apart from Frank's diary entries about Johannes Messner (his Austrian patient in Birmingham), this is the only place that he discusses his motives for enlisting.

reading "Jimmy Glover – His Book" by J. M. Glover, master of music Drury Lane Theatre. He is a Dublin man and has some good stories of Dublin and London in the seventies and eighties. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 6th October 1944
There was a bombshell today when Wynd was detailed to proceed to Hakodate tomorrow morning. As an interpreter he will be badly missed, but otherwise I think not! We didn't see much of him as he never ate with us but spent his day in his room. He only knew a few of the men and they were the elite and a couple of toughs from Glasgow! However he may be coming back here again. I have finished Jimmy Glover. God bless you, darling.

Saturday 7th October 1944 (Holy Rosary)
Wynd left camp at 9 a.m. and I was allowed to go to the station on the motor cycle to see him off. The station was crowded and we were the objects of mild amusement among the local populace. We were like a couple of Gullivers in Lilliput! Asari Gunso and I did not wait till the train pulled out but walked back home along the rail track. The train passed us on the way and we waved a last farewell to "Wyndo". It was awful at the station to see small girls of 10-14 years of age acting as porters and lifting heavy boxes. God bless you, Eileen my darling.

Sunday 8th October 1944
A terrific storm today which blew down the perimeter railing and the electric wires – so we'll have no light tonight. My darling, I have been reading your letters all afternoon in bed – have to go to bed it is so cold as we have no charcoal for the fire. The Japanese are in the same boat. I had a good attack of nostalgia reading your letters. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 9th October 1944
My darling, two wonderful letters from you this evening – April 24th and May 20th; I have now 40 letters and two postcards from you my own dearest Eileen. We heard today that Wynd is *not* coming back to us; also that we all may move soon from here. I want to stay here because you now know my address and any change means a delay in letters reaching me. I know you are showing a brave face at home and I am proud of you, Eileen. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 10th October 1944
My darling, I have sent you a special radio message this evening and oh I would be so happy if I knew you would receive it. You are supposed to send a reply. The men have been showing me snaps and photographs of their wives and families. How I have envied them today. Darling, when will your snap arrive? I want so much to see you again – even in a snap. My dearest one, I have been thinking of Ranafast today. I think we should visit it together some day when we are married. I had a night call last night to an epileptic. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 11th October 1944
My own darling, more letters tonight but alas none for me; but how can I grumble with my 40 letters from you. Oh what treasures each letter is to me. I know them all by heart almost already. Eileen, my dearest one, will our day never come? I have had an awful day investigating a stolen greatcoat; pay; and boots – apart from 4 sick parades, hospital rounds, food, microscopic study for amoebae; 2 interviews with Hirate Tui! God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 12th October 1944
Another hectic day with boots, pay, and sick parades. 210 letters tonight and not a one for me – I call it cruel and hard. If your letter would only come – the one with the snap in it, I want so much to see our ring, Eileen, because it means so much to us both. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 13th October 1944 (Mother's 4th Anniversary R.I.P.)
My darling, I have had another terrific day trying to do a hundred things at the same time. Many men received Red Cross messages from home this evening and were allowed to reply to them. Oh my Eileen do not think that I don't know that you wrote at every available opportunity. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 14th October 1944
My own darling, I am so very happy tonight. I have now received 43 letters and 5 postcards from you. Tonight I had three letters dated January 30th 1944 and March 19th & 27th 1944; three cards dated April 19th, may 11th & 15th 1944. A card from father, Maureen, Margaret, Una, Joe Murphy, May, *and* Frances. Darling, I am so glad for your sake because you seem to be having a grand time in your bicycle in Inishowen, Antrim Coast, Wicklow and Connemara. I was thrilled about Felix and Mona's new arrival in master Hugh. Life would be dull without news of you and all your dear ones and mine too. God bless you.

Sunday 15th October 1944
My darling, I am so happy tonight *because* I have been reading your letters and cards again. My day has been busy as usual. Got up at 6.30 a.m.; P.T at 7.10 a.m.; tenko; hospital; breakfast; 8.30 a.m. prayers at chapel + prayer to St. Joseph; 9 a.m. sick parade; 10 a.m. hospital rounds; 11 a.m. American football with Andler and Matuozzi; noon lunch; inspect hospital food; 1.30 p.m. went out on coal lorry with Mattuozzi in place of a medical orderly who was sick – finished at 3.30 p.m.; bath at 4 p.m.; read letters till 5.30 p.m.; hospital supper and my own at 6 p.m.; concert 7 p.m. till 9 p.m.; tenko and now (9.30) writing to my best girl! Not to mention a meeting of all British hanchos at 11.30 a.m. when we discussed recent thefts! I was in good throwing form with the football and enjoyed my coal heaving. Thank God I am very fit. I am wondering will this war *never* end. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 16th October 1944
My own darling, yet another letter from you, dated August 9th. Oh the happiness that you have brought to me through your letters. You had just returned from your tour of Wicklow and you had a glorious time, thank God. It makes me so very happy to know that you are really enjoying life in spite of everything. Capt. Brown arrived today from Hakodate and is his old self. Rumours of Andler leaving for a new camp near Hakodate. Had a nice letter from wyndo and bristow, who is a Catholic. Ball practice in the afternoon and I volunteered for coal heaving because I feel so fit. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 17th October 1944
And now there are rumours of me going to the new camp as M.O.! I have been coal heaving this morning with Andler, Lutter, and Lt. Hirate. I find that I can shovel away merrily for 1 hour without being tired. I have never been so fit in my life; I couldn't have worked like this last year. I may have another letter tomorrow. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 18th October 1944
Hundreds of letters tonight, darling, and none for me, but I don't really mind because God has been very good to me as regards letters and as regards you, Eileen. I have developed a mild tenosynivitis of my left tendo achillis which does not seriously interfere with my powers of locomotion. I have a nice pair of blanket socks now. You will love them when you see them – they are the very latest in camp fashions! We have just finished a wonderful feast of cake, toast, margarine and jam. Andler, Al Brown, and I have wonderful times nowadays together. Al Brown showed me his first and only letter from his wife and daughter. He is a lucky man to have such a family. His wife writes a wonderfully descriptive letter of the family happenings at home. She is fascinated watching her daughter and two boys growing up. I told him how much I envied him. God bless you, darling.

Thursday 19th October 1944

The locals say there are big happenings around the philippines and formosa during the last 5 days but we know who is winning. We have several pet rats which crawl around the Mess floor every day – we don't worry about them a bit! We are used to them now. God bless you darling.

Friday 20th October 1944

My own darling, how I longed and yearned and hungered for a letter today. I can understand how you have felt recently. You are lucky that I am in Japan because it is so very convenient to the Trans-Siberian rail route. I have been in the dumps all day and no amount of thinking improved it. God bless you. Warnes has volunteered to go with me should I be moved from here! Goodnight, darling.

Saturday 21st October 1944

Oh my darling, I have had another precious letter from you in Omagh. You had just returned to school in September 1944 and you said you were happy. I had a quiet afternoon with you in the sun up on my hillock. Some day soon it will be really you in person who will sit by my side. Oh what happiness. God bless you, darling.

Sunday 22nd October 1944

Oh what a day this has been with sick parades, hospital, pay, and censoring postcards. My darling, I have sent you another card this evening and please God it will reach you before Christmas – maybe before the war is over! We had a walk this morning before breakfast and it was glorious. I am longing to see the snap you promised me. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 23rd October 1944

My darling, it has been a long, dreary, miserable day – rained all day and very cold. I began writing a letter to you in *Gaedhilge* (Gaelic) but oh what poor stuff it is; I have forgotten most of it, I am ashamed to say. I am reading Sherlock Holmes, (complete) but I have only waded through a quarter of it. The end of the war seemed a long way off today in spite of good tidings. Surely it will end sometime. God bless you, my darling.

Tuesday 24th October 1944

Darling, I had a pleasant surprise this evening when I had a letter from you and a card from Una; yours was dated March 15th and Una's June 15th 1943. You had just returned from your short visit to Dublin. You made me so happy and yet so jealous of your wonderful times in my beloved city. What a shame that I did not receive your Vatican message – it must have been mislaid in Malaya. Una's card was very refreshing. She loves you darling and says that you "are the one and only girl for me". You were good not to tell me about her illness, but thank God she is well again. They all love you, Eileen, and that makes me very happy; it means so much to me. Good night and God bless you, darling.

Wednesday 25th October 1944

My darling, I have been reading your letters all this afternoon and I am feeling ashamed of myself for not realising how few letters (cards) you have received from me and how little you have complained. I have now a more complete picture of you and your feelings during 1942–May 1944. You must have suffered agonies of suspense – I can read it all between the lines. In my first card I *had* to say I was being treated very well – I knew it would set your mind at rest. I wanted to do anything that stopped you worrying. This is my first anniversary at Muroran and it is even colder now than when I came here a year ago. I am sitting in bed writing this with frozen fingers and wearing my blanket coat! Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 26th October 1944

My own darling, I have just sent off a radio message to you (150 words). I was the only one in camp allowed to send this message. I do hope some of these messages are reaching you, darling, but I doubt it because I have never had a reply. I am lucky to be alive and in Japan. People in Malaya and Thailand are now cut off from all mail etc. God bless you Eileen. We had a birthday party tonight. It was Al Brown's birthday today and I gave him my sterling silver pencil and a card – "Birthday Greetings from Ireland" with the national flag in the centre + 4 aching teeth in each corner!

Friday 27th October 1944

My own darling, here I am again and what a day. Paddy and Nair were both sick this morning and everything went wrong. When I was in the office today I was shown snaps and portraits of the men's wives, fiancées and children. How I yearned for one of you, Eileen. I am shivering with cold, hence the scrawl. God bless you, darling.

Saturday 28th October 1944

No letters at all today! Darling, I am always expecting letters. I saw one of your "Malaya Camps" letters on the censor's desk today and yet I could not touch it. My name was mentioned today on the phone to Hakodate – does this mean a move? Paddy is well again, thank God. Four boxes of Red Cross clothing came today – a futile amount for so many men. I am reading my Irish Verse again. Oh my darling, when I think of you and home I become weary of this life at times. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 29th October 1944

I have been reading your letters and they have brought me comfort that nothing but my God can bring. Yet I have been intolerably lonely – so far from home and you and my dear ones. Andler and I play chess every evening nowadays – I am leading 2-1, but we are both bad; I am the worse. It was a busy morning with prayers, sick parades, hospital, and monthly inspection. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 30th October 1944

Darling, my mood has changed again and I have been happy today. Did you know that Una loves you very much and that when she was ill in the Mater Hospital in Dublin one of the nurses was a past pupil of yours and she sang your praises no end. Everyone loves you who ever knows you – I do not wonder at all. We had two hours digging today – it was grand. God bless you, Eileen darling.

Tuesday 31st October 1944 (Halloween)

My own darling, I am writing to you sitting in bed – that means it is cold! We are to have stoves tomorrow, but with only 3kg of coal! Paddy has been sick again and oh how I miss him. The Colonel is due here tomorrow, so everyone is in a flap. Reveille now at 6.30 a.m. indoors! A sign of the times? God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 1st November 1944 (All Saints)

My darling, you should see my new blanket socks; they are beauties, nicely trimmed with a blue edge! You would love them and my blanket coat. Nothing seems very incongruous in a prison camp as regards clothing. God bless you darling.

Thursday 2nd November 1944 (All Souls)

My own darling, what a day this has been with pay, Red Cross clothes issue, several visits to the office, change of winter clothing etc., etc. I have been on the run all day long. God bless you, darling.

Friday 3rd November 1944
We had an interview with the Colonel this evening and it lasted two hours. We are to have baths much oftener and the men will have fires frequently. I made my usual speech of thanks when he had finished and said how much we appreciated everything he had done. I am sending you another postcard this evening, Eileen. God bless you.

Saturday 4th November 1944
My darling, I have had a hectic day trying to sort out the awful mess Wynd has left the Red Cross issues of clothing. Many articles had been duplicated while other men had none. I had a few tough moments trying to please everyone. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 5th November 1944
My own darling, I am sitting huddled up in bed writing to my beloved – and though my heart is warm, myself I am very cold. I had a terrific day with the Red Cross clothing, sick parades, interviews, offenders, etc., etc. I am resigned to spend the winter here. God bless you, darling.

Monday 6th November 1944
My own darling, it seems that I never have a rest these days and it is a good thing. Tobacco and cigarettes cannot be bought at any cost nowadays. We have two packets of cigarettes weekly and I give one to Paddy – he will not accept the two as of yore. There is strict rationing of all things outside – we are lucky to be prisoners. Goodnight and God bless you.

Tuesday 7th November 1944
My own darling, I have been on the run all day fixing men up with boots and attending the sick. The hill above the camp is barren; there was a frost last night and the lads have seen the first snow on the mountains. We have stoves lit all day now. I haven't started using my hot water bottles yet! No letters today. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 8th November 1944
My dearest one, here I am again and still cheerful in spite of no letter tonight! Oh how I do love you on this cold November night – shivering does not improve the writing. Hot water bottle tonight! I expect to spend the winter here. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 9th November 1944
My own darling, there is an awful gale blowing tonight from the Siberian wastes – and oh! it's so cold. I am reading "Together and Apart" by Margaret Kennedy and it's good reading. I have had a hectic day around camp. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 10th November 1944
The snow has come at last and the usual blizzard from Siberia with it; temperature near 0°C. It has been a hectic day of trouble at the hospital when Comber was found with a missing sheet, beaten and all the orderlies paraded in the snow for 1 ½ hours – I stood with them in sympathy, but I guess that didn't help them much. I was the go-between the boys and the shoko. Darling, everyone is getting snaps from home – when is yours coming? God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 11th November 1944 (Armistice)
Hail, rain, and snow today and the usual hurricane with it which blew down all the fences around the camp! Dr. Shiba is due tomorrow. The doctors now have a sitting room with a stove in it up in the hospital. It is cosy and we have some privacy – we can read and play chess. I am leading Andler at chess 3-2. I love you. God bless you.

Sunday 12th November 1944
The Dr. Shiba came this evening and was much subdued – a man died at Hakodate a few days ago and the Col. was furious. He said in his letter, that it broke his Rule 5 that a man should die! I was busy with pay, clothing returns, etc. No letters for me today. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 13th November 1944
The Shiba man has changed a lot. We have had a very quiet day with him and he seemed very pleased with things. Darling, please do not *ever* cook any rice for me when we are married – I have had enough for a lifetime. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 14th November 1944
My own dearest child, I had a letter from you tonight and I am on top of the world again. It was dated March 20th and you had just returned from your holiday at Omagh with Miss McGuigan[31]. Mrs. Ray has been very kind to you, Eileen. You called me your husband to be and it made me strangely happy. God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 15th November 1944
My dearest darling, I have been gazing, and gazing, and gazing at you all evening. This has been the happiest evening of my prison life. This evening I was called up to the office by Asari and shown a beautiful snap of you taken at the door of Spring Villa and another one taken with another young lady whom I know not. Darling, I was allowed the great honour of having the snaps before the letters are censored – they were sent in April this year. My darling, you look wonderful, thank God. I shall be up half the night looking at these snaps of you. In one of the letters you said you would send a family snap every week. I should love that, Eileen. There is joy untold in my heart this night sweetheart. Hirate told us a big secret – Red Cross parcels for Christmas. God bless you, darling. Darling, the ring looks wonderful! Are you really mine? Or am I dreaming again?

Thursday 16th November 1944
(I did not sleep till all hours last night looking at you). My very own darling, I have spent my day looking at you. I showed you to Capt. Brown, Andler, Paddy, and Warnes. I am so very proud of you. I dreamed last night that Winston Churchill came to visit us here and brought me very good news! I asked him how the Irish regiments were doing? I am reading an Irish book called "Mr Dooley Among His fellow Countrymen" – it's about an Irish-American in Chicago. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 17th November 1944
Darling, I had 5 cards tonight – one letter from you (April 29th 1944), one card (June 5th '44), joint card from you and Frances from Kilkeel (July 2nd '44), and one from Kay O'Connor from Letterkenny (she is a staid old midwife from B'ham whose sister I befriended in Walsall when I was in B'ham). I was pleased to hear from Fergus[32] and know that he is praying for me everyday – you have so many people praying for my worthless self. They will be so very disappointed when they see me. It is bitterly cold here in this room. 0°C! God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 18th November 1944
My own darling, I will never grow weary of looking at you. This Spring Villa snap is the *real you*; the girl I have always loved so much. We have been scooping today. God bless you, Eileen.

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[31] Margaret McGuigan was Eileen's replacement as teacher in the Loreto School, Omagh.
[32] Fergus is Fergus O'Kane, Eileen's brother and the youngest of the seven children in the family. He was in a seminary during the war but did not join the priesthood. He was an accountant and met his wife Sarah in Morocco after the war.

Sunday 19th November 1944

My own darling, I have spent the entire afternoon with you in my room and read every one of your letters and cards. It was cold but I had a very happy time. The trouble about the winter is that I cannot spend much time with you alone in my room as it is so cold. The end of the war is not in sight any more and it makes me sad. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 20th November 1944

My own darling, this is my very last piece of writing paper – I had calculated on the war being over by this time! But alas my forecast is badly out. I cannot even visualise the end at all – it will be too wonderful to contemplate it. Corporal High saw a letter from you to me in the office today – dated July 1944! God bless you, Eileen. (Received oats and tea today. No cigarettes or tobacco in camp. Rice ration cut today. No canteen.)

Tuesday 21st November 1944

My own darling, another letter tonight dated May 19th – I think your snap must have been in this one because there were 14 words in it telling me of the snaps of our dear ones you were sending weekly. Darling your poor snap is being worn out by my daily inspections of it. The men are desperate for cigarettes nowadays. Thank God I don't even miss my pipe. Rice and stew 3 times daily! God bless you, darling.

Wednesday 22nd November 1944

My darling, the winter is here again but there is still Spring in my heart. My room is an icebox tonight but my heart is warm. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 23rd November 1944

My darling, here goes my last page and still the war is not over yet! We heard today that Red Cross supplies have reached Hakodate! The men are thrilled about it. I showed your snap to Sgt. Evans today – his fiancée is from Carrickfergus; she sounds a nice girl. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 24th November 1944

My own darling, 2,000 Red Cross food parcels came today – almost 5 each. They are American and weigh 12 ½ lbs each. We are to have one each month for 5 months! Maybe the war will be over by that time. Tonight I sent cards to you and father. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 25th November 1944

One whole American Red Cross food parcel each today. I was in charge of dividing it out and it was a pleasure to see the happy faces in camp this evening. We are to have another parcel on Christmas Eve and one on New Year's Day! There is chewing gum this time + coffee, sugar, corned beef, luncheon meat, paté, Klim, butter, jam, cigarettes, chocolate (2 bars) & salmon. There is great feasting this night in camp. God bless you.

Sunday 26th November 1944

My own darling, another of our days has gone and I have spent a pleasantly quiet afternoon with you, your snaps, and your letters. I have been optimistic today about the end of the war. The men are very happy. What a treat the coffee, milk and sugar have been today *and* the cigarettes. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 27th November 1944

It is now 10 p.m. and I have just finished my day's work in camp – and now I am about to finish the last of my precious notepaper; I don't know how it has lasted nearly 3 years. It was bought for me in Ipoh in July 1940 by Samaharan! God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 28th November 1944

My own darling, the war will *have* to end soon because I have very little paper left now. I am doing much microscopic work recently and have become quite expert on the subject of amoebic dysentery. I grow weary at times hearing how good the USA medicines and *everything* there is; good food, good *music*, good *education* ad nauseam. I'll get over it tomorrow. Paddy is making me a birthday cake! I am off to bed to dream of you. (As usual I am the "sucker" – gave packet of cigarettes to Araki, Ito, Asari, Kudo, Takahashi.) Michael Rodrigues presented me with a packet! Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 29th November 1944

Darling, I spent an hour last night in bed reading your letters and looking at your snaps. I have a wonderful collection and thank God I have them because they do help to keep me sane. I am reading short stories by Edward J. O'Brien. Oranges and apples arrived in camp today for Christmas. Paddy made me a lovely cup of chocolate at noon today – he is a jewel to me. The others don't have the same attention. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 30th November 1944

My own darling, we have had real Autumn weather recently and it was very pleasant. Tomorrow Capt. Brown is leaving us. He had treated every man in camp. Tomorrow is the second anniversary of the camp formation – not a yasume day. Concert on Sunday. Red Cross medicines on Monday – 13 cases. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 1st December 1944

Rainstorm all day long. Al Brown went off at noon today, having missed the first train. The Green archer visited me at 3 a.m. this morning – he is a good lad. Stumpy came later bearing his gifts. This was the 2nd anniversary of the camp. Tomorrow is my 5th anniversary in the army! And Monday my 32nd birthday. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 2nd December 1944

Darling, five years a soldier tonight! and I am colder tonight than I was five years ago at Crookham Camp! I am reading "Smoky" a story of a horse by Will Jones. Finished "Goodbye Mr. Chips" today – not as good as the picture. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 3rd December 1944

The coldest day ever, but we still had a big crowd at chapel. The Protestants have abandoned services for the winter but we intend to carry on! A great concert tonight but oh it was cold. I presented the prizes at the end. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 4th December 1944 (My 32nd Birthday)

My own darling, here I am becoming an old man. I began my birthday with Paddy's smiling face wishing me a happy birthday before I was properly awake! I found a lovely birthday cake awaiting me in the Mess. It was delicious. At lunch, Nair produced a delightful Indian curry, a cold salad, Christmas pudding + milk and sugar + 1 apple & 1 orange + a very lovely greeting card. Then I sat down and wrote a card to you and Una. I presented Nair with my precious scarf. Darling, I was so very near to you this day. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 5th December 1944

My darling, it has snowed all day but there is still joy in my heart. I dare not let myself think and so I go on and on living from day to day and the time passes quickly. Paddy made me a meat pie today! You would love him, Eileen. You *must* meet him! The Colonel is due tomorrow. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 6th December 1944

My own darling, it has been a restful day. The Colonel arrived and interviewed about 150 men. I asked today for a Japanese catholic priest to come here on Christmas Day, but it is still undecided. I made many requests for the men. A letter came today from the Swiss delegation at Tokyo saying that we could write home through them about wills, power of attorney etc. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 7th December 1944

Tonight there is a blizzard outside – cannot see two feet ahead but the snow is really very nice. Thank God I do not feel the cold at all – I was well broken in last year. The most wonderful part of a prisoner's life is when he is asleep comfortably in bed. It is a bad thing to sleep too well – you wake in the morning and feel as if you have been cheated, that you have missed all the luxury of it. The awful part of the day is getting out of bed in the morning. I am still drinking coffee three times a day. Paddy made me an apple and orange pudding yesterday. Have just finished reading "Aaron's Rod" (D. H. Lawrence) – a dreadful book. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 8th December 1944 (Immaculate Conception)

I awoke early this morning and looked out upon the loveliest snow scene I have ever seen. The snow was several feet deep and oh so white and pure for Mary's great feast day. We had our interview with the High Commandant. He promised to send a priest here on Xmas Day, thank God. I made my usual speech and thanked him for his generosity during the year, wished him a happy Christmas and prosperous New Year. I must off to bed. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 9th December 1944

Darling, I had a lovely walk this afternoon. The snow was very deep but it was pleasant. The kiddies were skiing everywhere. I had biscuits and jam this evening! The Dutch choir were singing "Silent Night, Holy Night" this evening and it made me homesick. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 10th December 1944

My darling, we had a big turnout at chapel this morning – snow deep on the ground, very cold. The Protestants have abandoned all services for the winter! So I am doubly proud of our lads here. I spent the afternoon in bed because I was feeling blue and wanted to be with you, Eileen. Goodnight and may He bless you, Eileen.

Monday 11th December 1944

My own darling, another day nearer. Oh if only you could see the beauty of the snows here. Tonight the hill above the camp is glowing white with a pinkish hue from the local blast furnaces reflecting on it. Had a long chat with Nair today about religion, love, and India! That lad has many deep thoughts in that head of his. I have been fed up today again. The Japanese proposed a Japanese Protestant missionary for Christmas to lead the service, but as he could not speak English the offer was refused. What a blessing that our Holy Mass is the same the world over – in a common language. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 12th December 1944

My darling, the snow is still falling and huge icicles are hanging from the roofs. I was busy with the pay today, but it has been dull. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 13th December 1944

Darling, I am very restless nowadays and dream very often that the war is over. The Red Cross medicines came today – 13 boxes! 480 American greatcoats, more pullovers, razors, etc. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 14th December 1944
My darling, it is now 10.45 p.m. and I have just finished working out a scheme for dividing Red Cross clothing among the British troops. There are vague rumours of the war ending soon. 5°C below today! Nair gave me coffee, milk, sugar today. In future Yasume Days on 5th, 15th, 25th each month! Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 15th December 1944
My darling, I had a lovely letter from you this evening. It was the letter you had typewritten by the Red Cross volunteers in London. It was dated July 22nd 1943 – sent to Malaya Camps. This has been a hectic day for me at work – not a single *moment* relaxed from 7 a.m. till 10 p.m. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 16th December 1944
My darling, I haven't had time to breathe today, but through it all I have had time to think of you. The snow is still deep on the ground but it is all very pleasant in spite of the cold. As usual I am not accepting any Red Cross clothing. Goodnight; God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 17th December 1944
My darling, I had a letter from you tonight and I am wondrously happy. It contained a lovely snap of Frances, Roland, and little Arthur. Darling congrats on winning the Clanabogan Cup and the Patrick Cup (I hope). You say that you feel our reunion is near and so do I my darling girl. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 18th December 1944
Darling, I just cannot imagine Frances McNabb having a husband and a baby, but I expect she is really an excellent wife and a good little mother. I have been thinking a lot about our married life recently and I know that we shall be infinitely more happy in 10 years time than Felix and Mona or Frances and Roland. Goodnight & God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 19th December 1944
My darling, this has been another terrific day. I try to keep working all day and try to ignore that awful longing and aching in my heart that is always with me. I only feel the intense cold in the early morning, but am quite immune to the climatic conditions now. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 20th December 1944
My darling, I have been working all morning and afternoon in the Quartermaster's department – caps, gloves, boots, towels, etc. Andler has taken a pair of gloves but I would not have anything. The time is passing very quickly and I am still confident that the end is near. I have diagnosed another case of malaria – in spite of the other two doctors differing. He is doing well on quinine. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 21st December 1944
My darling, I was dreaming about you again last night and oh we were so happy together. The time passes quickly nowadays. I have had some nice Christmas cards made and will send you one, but you will not have it till the war is over. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 22nd December 1944
My own darling, I am actually dreading the approach of Christmas because I know that it will be an unhappy one for me. I shall be thinking too much about the happiness I shall be missing at home with you, Eileen. I have been

busy today with pay, clothing, preparation for the Christmas cake, Red Cross parcels tomorrow. God bless you darling.

Saturday 23rd December 1944

My own darling, this has been one of my happiest days as a prisoner of war – and my busiest. I have been doling out food parcels today and had one myself; have collected all the cake ingredients too. The Japanese priest came in the afternoon – a very charming little man. Wonderful to relate he will come on Christmas morning at 8.30 a.m. and have confessions before Mass which will begin at 9 a.m. To finish my perfect day I received your most loving letter of March 3rd 1943. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 24th December 1944

My darling, this has been a terrific day preparing for Christmas. And now it is nearly 11 p.m. and I am tired and sad, thinking of you and those silver candlesticks. I know that you will have our candles burning again this year. I issued brand new American greatcoats to every man in camp; sick parades; cake ingredients; pay for medical orderlies; choir practice for tomorrow; good news for the men. Christmas cards from Nair and Jackson; have sent you one too Eileen – a winter scene of the view from my windows. God bless you, Eileen darling.



The Christmas card from Jackson to Frank.

Monday 25th December 1944 (Christmas Day)

My own darling, can you imagine the great and wonderful happiness I had this morning when I had Mass and Communion for the first time in almost one whole year. I could never hope to express the joy that was in my heart. I felt nearer and nearer to you, Eileen than ever before in my life. The Dutch choir sang "Silent Night" beautifully. I was homesick for a while but I realised my happiness and thanked the Good Lord for everything. We had much Holy Water blessed too; not to mention the crib. I had a present from Warnes – two precious bars of chocolate which he could ill afford. I had many Christmas cards too. The priest left many Japanese holy pictures behind for us and the men were thrilled. I have kept them for you, Eileen. We had lovely meals today with pork twice and Xmas cake. The concert was a terrific success. I dressed up as Santa Claus and gave out the prizes! I also had my photograph taken – another souvenir for you, Eileen. To complete my joy I sent you and father a card each today! It has been a perfect day – almost. God bless you, Eileen.




Two photographs from the Christmas Day concert, 1944. Frank is dressed as Santa Claus (left).

Tuesday 26th December 1944

My darling, my tiny hands are frozen but I still love you with all my heart and soul. I sent a card to Felix and Frank Duff today – I hope they will recognise the strange name. I cannot tell you how happy I am and how very optimistic I now feel. I am expecting liberation in June 1945. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 27th December 1944

My darling, how are you enjoying your holidays at home? I hope you are having good times at parties and dances. I want so much for you to be always happy, Eileen. I would feel much better if I knew for sure that you are not worrying about me. It was 6°C below 0°C today! Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 28th December 1944

Darling, I am writing this in bed, so please excuse everything. I am depressed tonight as our captors have told us of a big German advance into Belgium. Darling, *when*, oh when will we see each other again. Nothing exciting today. I am still looking at your lovely snaps. Good night & God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 29th December 1944 (Our 4th "Anniversary")

My own darling, I have been sad today thinking and thinking about the past. I had good news today – Corporal High has seen seven or eight letters (August date) in the office for me. I am anxious to see them all soon. May our next anniversary be spent together. I can only love you the longer we are apart. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 30th December 1944

My darling, we had another Red Cross parcel this evening. We are to have a cake each at New Year. Warnes was beaten up today by Ass, and I intend taking some action when the old man comes to visit us. I was busy today with giving out parcels, collecting cake ingredients, and giving out clothing. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 31st December 1944

My own darling, another year has ended and here I am in bed writing to you with cold hands. My captivity has only increased my love for you. I am learning more and more and more each day the real value of things that count. I can appreciate you and your love more – my religion, my country and my friends. Oh, darling, I haven't had a friend like you or Gerry in whom I could confide everything. I have been very sad today for no obvious reason. There were letters tonight but none for me. Surely this nightmare cannot last for another year. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Chapter 4:
1945

Monday 1st January 1945
The New Year has been opened quietly. We had a parade at 9 a.m. at which I read the commandant's speech[33]. I was up at the hospital early and gave them all my greetings. I had several New Year cards and am quite flattered about it too! We had a short concert in the hospital today. It has snowed all the day – so the New Year is white everywhere. This year I wish you all happiness and blessings. God bless you Eileen.

Tuesday 2nd January 1945
My darling, it has been a very dull day and I have been feeling very blue. I was expecting a few letters tonight but the interpreter is on holidays. The rations are small now – no vegetables. Oh my darling, I am longing and praying with all my heart and soul that this will all end soon. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 3rd January 1945
My own darling, I am terribly lonely and depressed now – but of course I mustn't show it. I am reading Sean O'Casey's "Juno and the Paycock", and this morning finished "The Playboy of the Western World" (J. M. Synge). I saw the latter play in Dublin (Abbey Theatre) in August 1936. I am having a glorious time reading those five Irish plays. "Spreading the News" (Lady Gregory); "Riders to the Sea" (Synge) and "Shadow and Substance" (Paul Vincent Carroll) – these are the other three plays. The introduction says that "Modern Irish drama leads what is left of European theatre". I was very proud to be Irish and always will be. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 4th January 1945
Darling, I am writing a card to you tonight and I am happy for the moment. I have just finished reading "Juno" and "Riders to the Sea" – the latter is a beautiful thing about island life off Galway. There were letters tonight but none came for me – and I was disappointed. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 5th January 1945
My darling, this has been a rest day and I have parted company with my Irish plays – I hated finishing them! There was a heavy snowstorm today and the snow is now 12" deep everywhere – 3 feet in places. We had a lovely walk yesterday out to the country and saw some lovely skiing and tobogganing down a pretty hillside. I would love to be able to ski. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 6th January 1945
My darling, this has been the coldest day ever – the men went out to work in a blizzard 7°C below zero; icicles formed on their eyelashes. My friend Nair has influenza (102.5°F) but feels better this evening. I arranged orange juice drinks for him this evening. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 7th January 1945
My darling, another week has gone by and I still love you. But recently my mind has been numbed and I live only from day to day and do not think of the day of my release. I find it the best way because it causes less mental

[33] The details of Frank's reading of the New Year's speech from the Commandant are described in detail by Keith Mitchell (see Postscript). In the speech Frank instructed the prisoners to honour the Emperor, work hard, forget their homes and loyalties, etc. Frank read everything in a loud voice but at the end he added in an even louder voice "You will not do any of these things!", much to the amusement of the men.

suffering. The weather is cold but pleasant. I like it except getting out of bed in the morning. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 8th January 1945
My darling, I had a lovely surprise this evening when 3 air mail cards from you arrived. I have been walking on air ever since. The dates were July 18th & 30th; August 4th. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 9th January 1945 (Josie's 6th Anniversary R.I.P.)
My own darling, there is a big crisis approaching for me in this camp and I need your prayers and my own for strength to do the right thing. I am arranging all my letters tonight. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 10th January 1945
My own darling, I am still in love with you and will never change. I have arranged all these letters inside your envelopes for safety. I have been reading about some of my experiences in Changi in the early days of *my* captivity – I have not mentioned any horrors at all. Sun has been shining in a clear blue sky for two days but still we are snow bound. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 11th January 1945
My darling, I am sorry about these awful letters which I am writing to you nowadays. So much is happening in the outside world that we are all excited, and the usual wave of optimism has swept over the camp. These folk are getting an awful pasting down in the phil. and formosa, not to mention the bee-twenty nines over tok. etc. I still love you. Did I tell you that some Japanese medical orderlies visited us the other day and a funny little lad began singing a song about Ireland in Japanese (march time). He came again today. He always gives me a very special salute. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 12th January 1945
My own darling, lovely weather we're havin'! Temperature at zero C during the last few days but snow today. I am reading "A Tree Grows in Brooklyn" (Betty Smith). Things are very quiet and the nips are very, very subdued. If only the Gerries would pack in things would end soon. I am longing with all my heart to see you again. God bless you, darling.

Saturday 13th January 1945
I am feeling blue and fed up listening to three rude Dutchmen gabbling away in their awful language. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 14th January 1945
My darling, it has snowed all day long and I have been bored again. I cannot account entirely for my "blues". Tonight I received a Red Cross sewing kit, pencil, and comb (stamped U.S. Army). We heard the good news that Singapore got it a few days ago! Darling, surely it will end sometime. I fear that we shall have a rough passage here during the last few months. We've had no vegetables but rice and onion stew three times a day. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 15th January 1945
My darling, this has been a Yasume Day and I had a T.A.B. injection. Oh my arm, how it hurts; I feel rotten, but mustn't go to bed. Lutter went to bed at 5 p.m. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 16th January 1945
My own darling, I had an awful night but am alright now thank God. There has been a wicked blizzard today. Terry told me today about the awful conditions up on the hill among the troops. It is agreed by all that the best place in Japan is in a prison camp. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 17th January 1945
My darling, the coldest day ever! I have started reading "The Forsyte Saga" (Galsworthy) – 900 pages! God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 18th January 1945
I had two small presentos from tessa san today and it pleased me very much (snowman & charm). Oh I have so many things to tell you and give you when we meet again. God bless you, Eileen darling.

Friday 19th January 1945
Tomorrow is your birthday and I can't give you anything but my heart as a present but you have always had that – so it's not really a present. Coal shovelling yesterday. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 20th January 1945 (Eileen's 32nd Birthday)
My darling, from early morning till late tonight I have been with you and wishing you every happiness. I wanted so much to see you and tell you all about it. Please God next year will see us together again never to be parted. I had a row this morning with Andler. Like all Americans his opinion is always correct and the only one. It is stupid to argue but the other officers said I was in the right. I stated that Dutch military law still held good in this camp in spite of the Japanese – and he said *no*. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 21st January 1945
My darling, the row is all over now but it wasn't yours truly who settled it! Maybe I'm in a bad way – all on edge like everyone else. I am now 80.5kg in weight (12 st 9 lbs) – my normal weight. A British cook was discharged from the cookhouse today very unjustly – he was struck by a Dutch cook and did not even retaliate – both were fired. The matter *was* reported to the nips by Lutter. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 22nd January 1945
My darling, we had a lovely walk this afternoon but oh it was so very cold. My feet have not been warm all day long. Nair gave me a lovely pair of slipper socks today – plush lined! What a luxury. No letters yet Eileen. The latest are dated October 1944. Good night and God bless you Eileen.

Tuesday 23rd January 1945
My darling, I have an awful cold and to make matters worse the temperature is 8°C below and the coal is not coal but dirt! I read Dom Byrne's "Messer Marco Polo" this afternoon and am now reading "Magnificent Obsession". Marco Polo is told by a Co. Antrim man from the Glens! God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 24th January 1945
My darling, it is now 11°C below but I've got my love to keep me warm. The diet has been rice and onion soup for past 4 weeks now. Only 10 patients in hospital and very few sick. Now reading "The Yearling" by Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings. Am writing to you tonight. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 25th January 1945

Darling, my Santa Claus photograph has arrived and it is terrific. I did not realise it was so good. Everyone came out very well. It will be a lovely souvenir afterwards to show you, Eileen. We had an inspection today by a Colonel from Tokyo. No letters for ages. Only 9 men in hospital. I do love you Eileen but I am now in a perpetual state of blues. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 26th January 1945

Yasume today, darling, and oh it was so cold in the chapel of Our Lady of the Snows this morning! I gave my Santa Claus photo to Reuneker today and the group one to Paddy. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 27th January 1945

My own darling, the new doctor from Hakodate came today (Japanese) but I haven't seen him yet! Canteen today 10 biscuits, cigarettes, matches. May peace come soon. God bless you, darling.

Sunday 28th January 1945

My darling, I love you, though there were no letters for me today. The new doctor seems a nice little man – can speak a little English. He will examine the men tomorrow. Nair gave me cake, butter, jam and coffee today. Terrific russian advance into gerryland. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 29th January 1945

My own darling, I do love you now as never before in my life. I can never love you enough. The doctor (Okamura) has finished here and now the colonel is due to arrive tomorrow. No news today, but it can't last long. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 30th January 1945

My darling, another day has gone – one nearer to home and you and peace. The colonel came today and spoke to the men as usual. He is much subdued. The doctor has gone. Nair gave me cake, butter, jam, tea with sugar and milk in it. Darling, I am longing to see you again. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 31st January 1945

My darling, we had another Red Cross food parcel today and already I have eaten most of the chocolate but don't want anything else. I had an interview with asari today and he gave me a solemn promise not to beat the men again. I am reading "The Kingdom of Theophilis" (Locke). God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 1st February 1945

My darling, I have finished my cigarettes – one to me, Asari, Arake, Green archer, Kudo, and his fingers. Gave raisins to Arake & Tessa san. I have finished chocolate too. We had our interview with Col. Emoto today and he spoke of the American revolution. He paid a special complement to me on the health of the camp. God bless you, darling.

Friday 2nd February 1945

My darling, I had a letter from you this evening and oh I was so thrilled. Alas it had been censored and partly obliterated. Goodnight and God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 3rd February 1945

My own darling, another day nearer to you and freedom. Sometimes I feel so very depressed because I feel that you are not receiving my postcards. I must *not* despair as so many here have done. A man burst out crying in a

barrack room last night. Of course I had to be stern with him for the sake of the other men's morale. God bless you.

Sunday 4th February 1945
Darling, we heard lovely records yesterday – Gounod's and Schubert's "Ave Maria", Haydn's Serenade, etc. I have daydreams of walks in the mountains with you.

Monday 5th February 1945 (Yasume)
My darling, oh what a gale and blizzard is howling outside. I have *never* felt so cold in all me life. Do you know that it is really possible for me to be home in a few months time. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 6th February 1945
Our big crisis is approaching with the imminent fall of Germany – will the nips pack in and send us home or will they fight to a finish – and we perish here with them. Awful gale tonight. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 7th February 1945
My own darling, I know now that if I am not a free man in a few month's time I shall never see home again – what an awful thought, Eileen. To think that I might never see you or home again. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 8th February 1945
My darling, I have a frost bitten thumb and am frozen stiff. Letters yesterday but none for me. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 9th February 1945
My darling, there has been a most awful blizzard tonight and all day today. I appealed for the night workers but they were sent out – you would not send a dog out on such a night. Anglo-American tension – I cannot stand the endless bombastic flow of words with lots of Ego. God bless you, darling.

Saturday 10th February 1945
My darling, the blizzard continues but it's not so cold. There were two terrific quakes today – it was thrilling watching the brick chimneys in the cookhouse swaying about from side to side. I still adore you – God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 11th February 1945
My own darling, another day nearer to you and freedom. Oh how anxious we all are to have it over and done with. At last the end seems to be coming very soon – in a couple of months. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 12th February 1945
My darling, we had a lovely walk this afternoon in the sun. I felt pleasantly tired. Rice ration cut from 700g to 570g. Very hungry. Nair gave me cake today, bless him. I am reading "The Sun is my Undoing" (Stern). God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 13th February 1945
My own darling, another day nearer to you and home. I had daydreams of our visit to India, Malaya, Java, Bali etc. which I am planning when we get married. I went with you at Agra to see the Taj Mahal, to Kashmir, Singapore, etc. Darling if only it comes true. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 14th February 1945 (Ash Wednesday)
I intend not eating any Red Cross food or smoking during Lent. I feel that I must do something even in prison because you are doing so much outside. I had a letter tonight July 1943! Darling it is awful the way they hold up letters here. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 15th February 1945 (Yasume; 3 years a P.O.W.)
Arake and Asari left today. Thank God, we have quite a crowd of Catholics at Sunday prayers in spite of the cold. Nair made me a lovely chocolate and raisin pudding tonight and hot chocolate drink! I was very hungry and enjoyed it very much. Darling, there are about 5 more letters arrived from you. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 16th February 1945
My own darling, the new medical corporal (Umegi) speaks perfect English; his best friend hails from Belfast! He has snaps at home (Otares) of Belfast. He was a ballet dancer in tokyo. I do love you. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 17th February 1945
My own darling, another cold day nearer to you. Many now estimate that the war will end in a very few months from now – Reuneker has written a wonderful essay on Asia – "he has no love for the Dutch" – nor have I. Maybe I am prejudiced against them. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 18th February 1945
My darling, I had such a wonderful dream about you last night – it was the happiest ever. Nair made me toast, butter, jam, and milk (hot) last night. Tonight porridge. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 19th February 1945
My darling, a big landing on Japan islands! It has been bitterly cold today and now I am hungry again tonight. I still have wonderful dreams of you and home. Darling, I know that I shall be at home soon with you. God bless you Eileen.

Tuesday 20th February 1945
A Lt. General came today (the head of all POWs) and condemned the camp as being too easy on prisoners – wants more workers out daily (gogo). Poor poppy has an awful time and lost much face during the inspection. They have now taken over the Red Cross medicines and they now administer them. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 21st February 1945
I know that I shall soon be home with you, my own darling. Still very hungry, but it is Lent. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 22nd February 1945
We had a lovely walk to the station today and back again to see Arake off, but were not allowed inside because general there with troops. *Tokyo* [in Gaelic script] hit with 2000 planes! Very cold & hungry. Good night and God bless you Eileen.

Friday 23rd February 1945
A blizzard blowing tonight and oh how I pity the night workers. I appealed to have them come home early tonight. *Leitir pro mé ó Éibhlín censored in office – fada soir nuair a bheidh an mhar caite. (Letter for me from Eileen censored in office – when will the war in the far east be over.)* [in Gaelic script]

Darling do you really love me so much. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 24th February 1945
There was a search today by *Hirate* [in Gaelic script] but nothing found. God bless you Eileen.

Sunday 25th February 1945
My *own* darling, Yasume Day, Red Cross parcel 9/10 lbs; very cold; sent you a card tonight. Big crowd at prayers this afternoon. Good night, Eileen. God bless you.

Monday 26th February 1945
My own darling, what a day this has been. About 10 a.m. a lad was brought back from work with a badly crushed foot – Tommy Kime. We decided to operate on him at the local Japanese hospital. Off we set on a 3 wheeler motor bike with our equipment – Andler, Stevens, and myself with Japanese Umeki and Tessa san. Arrived at the hospital we had to remove our shoes and leave them at the entrance. Then we had to wait for 1 ½ hours for the theatre to be ready. I worked in wet feet in the wet tiled theatre with Andler in wooden clogs. I gave the spinal anaesthetic perfectly and assisted Andler in the operation. He made an awful mess of things with lots of Japanese doctors and nurses watching us. There was obviously nothing that could be done and the foot had to be left more or less as it was. Andler and Stevens made a fuss of the nurses but I was too disgusted to notice anything or anybody. I did my part of the job perfectly. We went on a tour of the hospital and found it very up-to-date. We left at 2.30 p.m. Our tricycle bumped along until we came to a corner but alas we did not turn that corner but just went on ahead at full speed and landed in a rough ditch. I was thrown out on my head; the others escaped with bruises and the patient survived his second accident of the day. We pulled the bike out, hammered it together and came back to camp where Andler put two stitches in my head and swathed me in bandages. Now I have an *awful* sore head, very cold, and hungry. *Turchae [Turkey] has declared mhar [war] for us!* [in Gaelic script] God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 27th February 1945
My darling, letters tonight but none for me. I would love to have a letter from my loved one soon. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 28th February 1945
Had a restless night with pains in my neck muscles. A terrific blitz on camp workers. My Paddy is going out to work tomorrow and Finucane is taking his place (he is an Anglo-Indian). Andler made a confession to Lutter and me that since his operation on Kime he has been convinced that he is not a surgeon! God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 1st March 1945
A glorious Spring day with the sun shining all the day. I had a lovely dream of you last night, Eileen. Kime has temperature and foot not so good. God bless you, Eileen my darling.

Friday 2nd March 1945
My darling, more letters tonight but none from my darling one. There has been a terrific blizzard all day long, though not so cold. The commandant promised to have the night workers home early tonight. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 3rd March 1945
My own darling, how are you after all these years? Please God it will all end soon – the heartache and the longings will cease. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 4th March 1945
My darling, I had 3 letters and one card from you this evening and so I am very happy. Two contained snaps of father and Anne, also Felix, Mona, Sheila and Hugh. I cannot tell you how happy you have made me. It was wonderful to know that Mattie is well and safe & you can write to her when you please. Must go to bed, Eileen. God bless you.

Monday 5th March 1945 (Yasume)
Darling mine I am so very optimistic tonight. I know it is only a matter of waiting a few months until we meet again. Felix looks grand in his civilian clothes – I am longing to be in mine again. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 6th March 1945
My own darling, I love you so very much tonight that I cannot bear to think about it in this prison camp. I volunteered to go out on a truck to shovel slag this afternoon in place of Sgt. Stevens (USA) who made no protest! The camp Commandant sent for me and ordered me not to go but to send Stevens – and so it was. Andler was rather ashamed of his American orderly and even volunteered to go in my place. It was snowing hard and there was slush everywhere. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 7th March 1945
My darling, I am hungry and have a Red Cross food parcel untouched! (for Lent). I wonder will April 1st never come – I doubt it very much. There has been a howling gale all day long. *Americans have reached Cologne* [in Gaelic script]. Darling please forgive my awful letters these days. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 8th March 1945
My own darling, how I have loved you this day as never before in my life. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 9th March 1945
My darling, I love you so very much but I have never been so hungry in all my life before. The war is going great guns now and will soon be over please God and we shall be wed. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 10th March 1945
Too cold to write. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 11th March 1945
My darling, three more weeks of Lent! I think perhaps the huns will be finished by that time. I heard today that most of the men have eaten their emergency ration. All the medical orderlies went to work today for ½ day morning or afternoon. God bless you, darling.

Monday 12th March 1945
My darling, the end is surely not far off because the *Janchs chuaidh siad obher an Rhine ag Cobhlens* (*Yanks went over the Rhine at Koblenz)* [in Gaelic script]. I do love you now so very much my sweetheart. Rumours of Red Cross in the near future – early in April perhaps. Good night & God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 13th March 1945
My darling, Umeki showed me pictures today of Belfast City Hall, Bird's Eye view, Bellvue, Mourne Mountains, Newcastle etc. I felt very homesick and I wanted so very much to see you. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 14th March 1945
My darling, I am cold and hungry but I adore you as never before. The end is nearer and nearer thank God. May He bless you Eileen this night.

Thursday 15th March 1945
Yasume Day, only 15 more days in Lent. I have had an awful day and haven't been warm once. Backache and hunger did not improve me much. Darling, I do want you to love me when I get home again. God bless you.

Friday 16th March 1945
My darling, we had 220g of flour issued each yesterday – I am keeping to have a cake baked for Easter. To think that tomorrow is St. Patrick's Day and I hoped to be free on that day in 1944. God bless you darling.

Saturday 17th March 1945 (St. Patrick's Day)
My darling, I have remembered you so much all the day long – you and Ireland have not left my thoughts for a moment. I made two little St. Patrick's day cards for Nair and Reuneker; they were pleased. Written on top was *Chun glóire Dé agus onóra na hÉireann (For the love of God and the glory of Ireland)*; the national flag in the centre; and *lá Fhéile Pádraig (St. Patrick's Day)* at the bottom. Reuneker will always carry it and show it to his wife and children. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 18th March 1945
This has been quite a momentous day because the *Gearóids d'iarr siad peace terms on 15adh lá (the Jerries asked for peace terms on the 15th)* [in Gaelic script], but of course they will be ignored as *Bhictorí (Victory)* [in Gaelic script] is so near already. I have been reading your letters and mine this afternoon in my room where a lovely Spring sun is streaming in and I have noticed the sad change in my daily letters to you. In Changi I was happy and carefree; good food, good friends, and Holy Mass with the chapel a few yards off – everything was so pleasant and so unlike a prison camp; but here everything is the direct opposite and this is a prison. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 19th March 1945
My own darling, I love you more tonight than ever I thought it possible to love anyone. We have been living on rice and onion stew for months now and it's becoming a bit monotonous! Darling, I hope you are a good cook. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 20th March 1945
My own darling, I had *two* wonderful dreams about you last night – one in Belfast and the other in Dublin. We were shopping in Royal Avenue in Belfast and visiting a clinic in Dublin! I also dreamed of an air raid. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 21st March 1945
My darling, some of the boys had telegrams tonight from home. There is a letter from you dated October 2nd waiting to be censored. Spring has come for a few days and it was 7°C above zero. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 22nd March 1945
My darling, it seems from the telegrams of last night that the photographs have reached home safely! I hope you weren't too shocked by mine. It has snowed all morning and rained all afternoon – first rain for 5 months but much warmer. God bless you, my darling.

Friday 23rd March 1945
My darling, I have had a great success with a case of mine a few nights ago. A night worker had a bad wound to his nose and upper lip. I spent from 1.30 a.m. till 3.30 a.m. on him and got a perfect result with no disfigurement at all. His nose is perfect, though the cartilage was badly torn right through. I had been doing coolie work all evening carrying sacks of cinders for a nip air raid trench. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 24th March 1945
My darling, how do you like my new paper? It was bought many years ago in Malaya! It has been a hectic day for me because it was Yasume Day. A general is coming from Tokyo tomorrow morning at 7 a.m. God bless you, Eileen dearest.

Sunday 25th March 1945 (Palm – Annunciation)
My darling, we had roll call this morning outside for the first time since last Autumn. A general inspected the camp this morning. Bread tomorrow, butter (18g) tonight. A row with Sgt. Stevens today. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 26th March 1945
Nothing exciting today. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 27th March 1945
My own darling, it is now 10.10 p.m. and we have just finished air raid and fire practice. Nothing exciting today. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 28th March 1945
My darling, we had a lovely walk in the warm afternoon. It was glorious, but oh I was so weary after it – I must be very weak. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 29th March 1945
Holy Thursday and I haven't been to Communion or had mass since Christmas Day. Oh if only there was a priest here – what a difference it would make to life here for me. *Indiú (Today) Nuremburg reached!* [in Gaelic script]. Darling, it cannot be long now. Many letters tonight; Andler had three – one dated December 1944 from his mother. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 30th March 1945 (Good Friday)
I am reading "Man of Glory – Simon Bolivar" by Thomas Rourke. It is good to read of Generals O'Leary, O'Connor, and O'Higgins (Chile President). A glorious sunny day – temperature 50°F. We had stations of the cross and gospel – followed by kissing the cross at 5 p.m. today. God bless you my own darling.

Saturday 31st March 1945 (Holy Saturday)
My darling, at last Lent is over and I am happy I have done something. I was so very hungry and tempted sorely with my Red Cross food and other dainties which I gave away to Nair – sugar, bread, cigarettes, biscuits. It won't be long now! Paddy gave me a present of two packets of chewing gum and one packet of Camels today. I shall love you forever *mo leanbh (my child)*. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 1st April 1945 (Easter Sunday)
My darling, never has there been an Easter less like Easter before in my life. Nair gave me 5 pancakes and tobacco (gold dust) this morning. Have had coffee, milk, and sugar three times today; 3 cigarettes and a few pipes – the pipes were glorious after such a long time! We had Rosary and prayers at 5 p.m. this evening – quite a crowd

turned up. If I could only send you a memento of Easter week how happy it would make me. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 2nd April 1945 (Easter Monday)
My own darling, I had a lovely letter from you (October 20th) tonight which told me all that I want to know about you – that you are well and still love me. So you have been told that we are allowed to send cables to you? Well, in a way we write out forms at very irregular intervals but nobody has ever heard of one reaching home. Nair gave me a lovely prune pudding today. Officers had bread tonight – I gave half of mine to Nair. Andler and I are making a cake on the 4th and so I am planning a party with Reuneker and Nair for Yasume Day on the 5th. The former sent me two small cakes today. God bless you, darling.

Tuesday 3rd April 1945
My own darling, I am having a grand time delving into my Red Cross parcel! Nair gave me three lovely scones tonight – just the same as you will make when we are married! You owe a lot to that small Hindu boy. Cold today and not much coal. Rations still poor – rice and onion stew three times a day. Occasionally fish or raw onion and míso for lunch. Good news today about our advances. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 4th April 1945
My darling, I have had a happy day. Scones and toast + coffee tonight! Andler made a cake this morning and I had half a share in it. Am keeping it for tomorrow to have coffee and cake with Nair and Reuneker. Please darling, excuse all this talk about food. I am sending you a card tonight but maybe I'll be home before it reaches you. Oh the longing that is ever in my heart to see you again and see home and Ireland and all our dear ones. I have been a prisoner long enough. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 5th April 1945 (Yasume)
Darling, I had a lovely afternoon party with Nair and Reuneker – currant cake with butter and jam. My Eileen, we are lucky to have had so much mail between us, because many boys here have had no word from home at all. I hope you are enjoying Easter holidays at home. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 6th April 1945
My darling, will this letter go on and on forever or will our good God finish it in the near future? Great things are happening in the big world outside this prison camp – they are happening quickly but not quickly enough for me here. Life drags on ad infinitum in camp. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 7th April 1945
My own darling, *ins an tír seo, tá an uaitharán caithte! (in this country the president is thrown out!)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. This is wonderful – "mirable dictu". It has been a quiet night and a quiet day. I am reading a good book about New Hampshire (1769) called "Look to the Mountain" (Legrand Cannon). Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 8th April 1945
My own darling, the *cabanet (cabinet)* [in Gaelic script] has fallen too. Also the *Sobhiet has denounced the non-agression pact* [in Gaelic script] with nips. This is yet another step nearer to freedom and peace. Glorious day of sunshine; had some shot practice – very good form. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 9th April 1945
My darling, the guard challenged me to some shot putting at the guard room this afternoon and I beat the best man by 15 feet! They were furious and said it was my height which beat them! Now reading Strand Magazines of 1926. Andler and I are good friends again. How I wish I could see you again and tell you all. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 10th April 1945
My own darling, I had another wonderful dream about you last night. Nair gave me a tin of *súchra indiu (sugar today)* [in Gaelic script]. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 11th April 1945
Still ravenously hungry! God grant that the end will come soon. God bless you Eileen.

Thursday 12th April 1945
My own darling, *chuala mé indiú go mbeidh mé agus na fir eile ag dul tuas go Sapore, go beidhimid ag obair ins nag coal mines Rachamid i gceann aon nó mar sin. Tá brón orm. Ní maith liom é. Tá an sgeala maith indiu. Tá hanobher i lamhaibh na Sasanach! Tá grádh mór orm agat.* (*I heard today that I and the other men will be going up to Sapporo, that we will be working in the coal mines. We will go in a month or two, or thereabouts. I'm sad. I don't like it. The news is good today. Hanover is in English hands! I have great love for you.)* [Irish in Gaelic script] I shall always love you, Eileen no matter what happens. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 13th April 1945
My own darling, *tháinic an sgeala olc isteach indiú go bhfuair rosbhelt bás (The bad news came in today that Roosevelt had died)*. [Irish in Gaelic script] But it will not make any change in the war. Everything is going strong thank God. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 14th April 1945 (Yasume Day)
My own darling, *tháinic na Americans go dtí an Elbe (The Americans came to the Elbe)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. We had memorial services today. Darling, I have been restless and unhappy for the past few days and I cannot understand it. I *should* be happy because you love me and I, you. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 15th April 1945
My darling, I am reading "The Art of Thinking" by Ernest Dimmet. Oh my Eileen what will the next six months hold for you and for me? It will hold peace at last for all Europe and you all at home thank God – no more black outs, *no* more air raids. That thought alone makes me happy and willing to meet my fate in the months that lie ahead of us. I had some shot practice today and am quite strong. The shoko came back from Hakodate today and said Wynd was well. I shall love you *always*, Eileen, come what may. God bless you, darling.

Monday 16th April 1945
My own darling, I am still loving you more and more each day we are separated and it will always be the same. I am more pessimistic about the length of my stay in this country. We all think there are bad months ahead of us but with God's help we shall see them through. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 17th April 1945
My own darling, another day nearer to our goal. Many boys had telegrams saying that their photograph had reached home. I hope my letter and snap reached you safely Eileen. We have a case of suspected typhoid in camp

– an Irishman (Paddy Byrne). Good night darling. I am reading "Barry Lyndon" by Thackeray and liking it. God bless you.

Wednesday 18th April 1945
My darling, *tá síad fiche chilomethre ó Berlin anois (they are 20 kilometres from Berlin now)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. It will surely end in a few more days when the *capital falls* [in Gaelic script]. Nothing much doing today. I shall always love you come what may. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 19th April 1945
My own darling, can you imagine what it is like to be shut up like this for over three years – away from you, from home and our dear ones? Sometimes I think it will never end and that I shall never leave this *tír maluighte cam (accursed country)* [in Gaelic script]. What a fate that would be. I shall always love you. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 20th April 1945
We had our first bath for a week today. My weight is now 78kg – an increase of 0.5kg! I am reading "Sorrell and Son" having finished "Barry Lyndon". These people are all set for invasion – God help them. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 21st April 1945
My own darling, you mean everything to me and always shall. Butter 140g in officers' canteen today! "Sorrell and Son" is very soothing just now for me. Andler and I are friends again. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 22nd April 1945
My darling, *beidh na saighdiúirí ag teacht isteach ins an camp seo i gceann trí lá nó mar sin (the soldiers will be coming in to this camp in three days or thereabouts)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. This is a bad sign. *Buaileann said na fir i gcoinnuidhe anois (They beat the men continuously now)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. I think this is the beginning of bad times. I had lovely pancakes for supper – thanks to Nair. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 23rd April 1945
My darling, you must be bored reading this awful journal each day in which nothing happens much. We were ordered to pack up the Red Cross medicines – except a month's supply! This is very significant of a move. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 24th April 1945
My darling, it is all over bar the shouting. *Tá na sobhiets i Bherlin anois; tá an Sasanacht i hamburg (The Soviets are in Berlin now; the English are in Hamburg)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. I am sending a card to Spring Villa tonight and it makes me homesick. The big question is when will these people pack in? Pray God it will be soon. God bless you, darling.

Wednesday 25th April 1945
Yasume Day! Bread in canteen – butter, raisin bread, sugar, tea and milk made a lovely afternoon. I think too much about food these days and not enough about you, my darling. Had some real baseball today with bat – good form. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 26th April 1945
My own darling, the military guard took over duty today and they have patrolled the place without ceasing from early morning. Sudden change in weather – cold. Surely the end will come in a few days. I should be happy for

all your sakes to know that the European war was over – that is so important to me here, to know that you are all safe from danger. Don't worry about me. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 27th April 1945
My darling, *tá leath Berlin cailté! (Half of Berlin is lost!)* [in Gaelic script]. You know that I shall always love you, no matter what happens out here, Eileen. A miserable day of rain. I am reading "Dog Stories" – 600 pages of it. What about *our* dog? God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 28th April 1945
My darling, the guards get worse and worse. Borski slapped today. I avoid them entirely. Rained all day. God bless you, darling.

Sunday 29th April 1945
My darling, another day of torture. This was the Emperor's Birthday but there was no parade. Two apples each! Darling there are hectic days ahead here when the invasion begins. We shall have a horrible time but it will be worth it. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 30th April 1945
My own darling, sometimes I think it will never end and that I shall never see you or my native land again. I know it is wrong to despair like this – I must trust in God and His Holy Mother for deliverance. We now have some awful cereal mixed with rice nowadays. Onions and carrots in the stew. Nair gave me apples today. Paddy gave me cheese yesterday. Very hungry always. Men are ravenous and are more tempted to steal than ever before. Borski and Jongsma had their first card from their wives in Java – they are interned with other civilians there. Guards not so bad. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 1st May 1945
My very own darling, at last your big day has arrived *agus tá na gearoids buailte! fa deireadh (and the Jerries are beaten! Finally)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. You can never know what relief this has brought to me – to know that all your worries are over. Good night and God bless you Eileen.

Wednesday 2nd May 1945
My own darling, I just want to tell you tonight that I love you now and always shall love you. We have found out that it is all really true! God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 3rd May 1945
My own darling, *fuair hitler agus musolín bás indé (Hitler and Mussolini died yesterday)* [in Gaelic script]. Nearer and nearer every moment. What rejoicings must be on at home. My heart is too full these days to write. God bless you Eileen.

Friday 4th May 1945
My darling, I have been daydreaming about you today – getting ready for our honeymoon, ready for trip to Dublin, ready for holidays by the sea, our life together, our love, our home and our happiness. I want to see Dublin again! *fuair goebbels bás indé (Goebbels died yesterday)* [in Gaelic script]. God bless you, my Eileen.

Saturday 5th May 1945
My darling, a beautiful Yasume Day. We had a thanksgiving service this evening in our little chapel. I sent off a card to father this evening. No cards from you for ages, Eileen. The nips are burning mine I know – never mind. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 6th May 1945
My own darling, another day nearer the goal. I have had diarrhoea and so examined my stool today and found that I had amoebic dysentery. I have started a course of treatment. Oh if I could only tell you all about it. Five apples each yesterday and one loaf in canteen! Good sign! God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 7th May 1945
My darling, we had word today that Col. Emoto will be here tomorrow. The men are very happy about this. *Tá an sgeala ionghtach uaith anois. Tá deanmarc agus holland buailte. And anois cád a deanfaidh na daoine seo? (The wonderful news from you now. Denmark and Holland are beaten. And now what will these people do?)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. God bless you darling.

Tuesday 8th May 1945 (Charlie's[34] Birthday R.I.P.)
My own darling, I had a terrific scene with a guard this morning who ordered me to salute. I refused and asked him to be sent to the guardroom – then he coolly walked away. It was a great moral victory for me. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 9th May 1945
My own darling, I had a card from you this evening dated November 7th last year. You were having a Mass said on my birthday; you wished me a Merry Christmas and sent *all* your love. Oh Eileen this has made me so very happy this night. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 10th May 1945
My own darling, how have you been since yesterday? We had our lecture from the colonel today and three times he stressed that it was entirely due to Major Murray that this camp was so fit. I felt very flattered indeed. I pointed out two other doctors who were also doing their work with me but he would not have it at any cost. He has been good to us. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 11th May 1945
My darling, I am still alive and loving you as never before. Rain today. 4 patients. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 12th May 1945
My own darling, another day nearer. Rained all day. Nair gave me coffee with *siúcra (sugar)* [Irish in Gaelic script] – he is good to me. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 13th May 1945
My darling, it has been a cold miserable day. Alas we have a man in the guardroom who is starving for the past two days (Woodward). These *daoine (people)* [Irish in Gaelic script] have decided to fight on. I wonder how long they can last out. God bless you, Eileen.

[34] Charlie was Charles Murray, younger brother of Frank. He developed encephalitis as a boy and died young. He was the first family member to know about Frank's love for Eileen.

Monday 14th May 1945
There are reported to be 60 men coming here tonight from Hakodate. God bless you, Eileen.

(Irish Text)

Tuesday 15th May 1945
The sun has been shining. I have been thinking about my friend Mgr. Messner if he has gone back to his native land now that it is free again. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 16th May 1945
My own darling, there is great activity in camp now preparing for a move about 21st of the month. As you think I am in Hakodate this move will not make any difference because you won't know about it. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 17th May 1945
My darling, still raining; still miserable. Everything all set for the big move. We are to have over 19 men back from Hakodate tomorrow morning? God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 18th May 1945
My darling, our chickenpox case is now a smallpox! It is the first I have ever seen. This should stop the projected move very effectively for a few weeks. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 19th May 1945
My own darling, I am still loving you more and more as the days roll by. The camp was turned upside down because of the smallpox. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 20th May 1945
My darling, we have been quarantined for two weeks starting yesterday. The men will have complete rest during that time – and some of them need it, God knows. The move will take place immediately afterwards. The patient will be moved to a Japanese hospital tomorrow morning and will be accompanied by Moffat and Finucane. Reuneker came this evening and showed me snaps of his wife and their wedding. I gave him a little leather note case to keep them in. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 21st May 1945
My darling, the patient was removed to the Japanese hospital today. His condition was not too bad when he left. Finucane went with him alone. I am reading "Way of a Transgressor" again. We have to examine every man in camp each morning and take their temperatures. P.T. begins tomorrow morning 5.30–6 a.m.; 1–1.30 p.m. and Major Murray will lead it (orders). God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 22nd May 1945
My own darling, we heard today that Porter is worse. Finucane is feeling the cold because he sent for some more clothes. Still examining the men daily. I am the most dangerous contact in camp because I handled the patient up to the last moment of leaving camp. It was my duty – I could not ever be afraid of any disease. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

(Irish Text)

Wednesday 23rd May 1945
My own darling, every day is a holiday and it is no good for the men. They get into too much trouble. I am having a fine time conducting the P.T. twice daily "from my watch tower in the skies" (420 men). God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 24th May 1945
My own darling, I am sending you a card tonight. Heaven alone knows if these cards will ever reach you now. We have heard that the men start work day after tomorrow. Official Yasume tomorrow. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 25th May 1945
Yasume Day and the last day of rest for most of the camp. Had a long talk this afternoon with George Reuneker and Krish Nair, continued after supper. Bread today and tomorrow; 80 cigarettes! God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 26th May 1945
Reuneker brought me lots of peas tonight. Darling, you will love him when you know him and learn to know his ways. He is a dreamer and an idealist. Nips took over Red Cross medicines today! God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 27th May 1945
My own darling, these are dull days – no books to read when it rains. No stove when it is cold. Spent the afternoon and evening darning my pullover. Reuneker brought me a lovely tulip today and bread. Nair gave me *tae dílis (tea faithfully)* [in Gaelic script] in the afternoon. I am spoiled. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 28th May 1945
My darling, we had a parade this evening and the camp commandant read out Col. Emoto's farewell speech. He expressed his sorrow at leaving us so very suddenly. He would like to see us all when the war is over – as friends. There was great gloom in camp. He mentioned about the new camp – the good arrangements he had made for our comfort there. There is talk of postponing the move. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 29th May 1945
My own darling, the move is due on 2nd June next. Reuneker brought me two beautiful tulips today – yellow and pink. Nair had a lovely pair of worn trousers made for me today from an old blanket. So, darling, somebody loves me a little. God bless you, Eileen my darling.

Wednesday 30th May 1945
My darling, the new colonel is due tomorrow at 8 a.m. for inspection and speech. Reuneker and I have decided to make his son, Franklin, a doctor. I am reading Fr. Brown in the mornings and afternoons. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 31st May 1945
My darling, we had awful news tonight that Finucane has contracted small pox. Poor lad got this from doing his duty. We are moving on June the 4th in two parties – 4 a.m. & 11 a.m. The work will be farming for two months. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 1st June 1945
My darling, another day nearer. We are losing four blankets each for a few days – it's gonna be cold at night. Final arrangements have now been made. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 2nd June 1945

The men had a good rest today prior to moving. Reuneker, Nair, and I had a party tonight. There won't be many more in Muroran. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 3rd June 1945

My own darling, what a tragic day this has been. There was terrific hustle this morning early moving everything to the railway wagons. Two men were killed outright at a railway level crossing (open) – Sgt. Major Durrant and Cpl. Angell (Catholic), two of the best men in camp. They were standing on the rails waiting for a goods train to pass when a passenger train came up the line suddenly and crashed into them. Durrant was almost decapitated; Angell had a depressed fracture of the skull. I have been sad all the day long and so our evening conversation was dull. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 4th June 1945

My darling, all the Dutch and 30 British left the camp at 6.30 a.m. this morning. Our lads in camp had a quiet day. I was busy with cookhouse, hospital, and seeing the nip commandant about the move. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 5th June 1945

My darling, I am now at my new abode[35] after a terrible day. It began at 1 a.m. in the cookhouse seeing the food divided out. Reveille and breakfast at 3 a.m. Left camp at 4.40 a.m. all loaded up. Entraining was awful – chaos everywhere, nothing arranged anywhere. The journey was dull because blinds were down most of the day. I was with Krish all day. Finally we arrived at Asibetu where terrific crowds greeted us. Then we took a second edition of the Lough Swilly Railway[36] and after much bumping came to Nisi Asibetu (a coal mining village) where more crowds greeted us. Four horses and carts met us and carried our heavier stuff. We marched three miles up hill & down dale over lovely country and finally reached the camp where Delahaye and George met us and helped us along. There was more chaos as we stood in the rain for ½ hour & later sorting out the baggage. And now to bed. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 6th June 1945

Darling, this is a brand new camp and very good for the men – they have better quarters but the officers have poor accommodation – 6 of us all in one room. There are 86 new men from Cemento, Hakodate and they are terribly weak – I spent the whole day with them, three or four sick parades for them alone[37]. There are beautiful wooded hills all around us here and the men should be healthier and safer here than in Muroran. God bless you, my darling child.

Thursday 7th June 1945

There is a coal mine not far away from here and it is expected the men will work there. The camp is still being built but is now much cleaner. The latrines and work places are inside – this is bad. Another bad day with the sick. George and Krish came. God bless you, Eileen.

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[35] This was the move from Muroran to the camp the prisoners knew as Nisi Asibetsu (or, more correctly, Nishi Ashibetsu) but it was actually Raijo – the prisoners did alight at a railway station called Nisi Asibetsu and presumably assumed that that was the name of their camp's location.

[36] The Lough Swilly Railroad was the Donegal railway line that took passengers to Crolly, the station nearest to Ranafast in the Gaeltacht; it was very slow moving.

[37] The new arrivals were previously at the Kamiso POW camp and worked at the local Asano Cement Works. Details of their working conditions were recorded in an anonymous, handwritten booklet in Frank's possession. It can be viewed at https://www.thebelfastdoctor.info/asano-cement-works. One of the new arrivals was Gunner Gwilym Rowlands, the man who took numerous photographs of the POWs after liberation. Between March 1944 and June 1945 the Kamiso men had a US doctor, Lt. John Bumgarner; he describes his experiences of Kamiso in a chapter of his memoirs, *Parade of the Dead* (McFarland & Co.).

Friday 8th June 1945
My darling, at last things are settling down and today has been quiet. I am doing much microscopic work. The men are working on the farm at present, but are expected to do other work very soon. George and Krish visit me every evening after evening roll call. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 9th June 1945
My darling, I am nearer to you even though I am further away in the wilderness. Much fewer new sick now thank God. The new lot are improving in spite of neurasthenic and nervous complexes! The men start work at the factory tomorrow – lumber, coal sorties, electricians and one volunteer for low temperature carbonisation (petrol from coal). God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 10th June 1945
My darling, it has been a miserable day – rained without ceasing. The men had a bad wetting coming back from work – four miles of bad muddy road. This communal life is not too good for me at times. George was ill today. He has not been detailed for work yet. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 11th June 1945
My darling, another dull day as a P.O.W. Had a row with Hirate and Umeki over working sick men in camp. I explained that I was only a prisoner at present etc. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 12th June 1945
My darling, I have been so mad today because they made the sick work. Lutter and I were outside for a while today – it was heavenly. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 13th June 1945
My darling, it has been a glorious yasume day – blue sky, hot sun, my first cuckoo of the season. George and I discussed the future together. Darling, it might be a long time yet before we meet. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 14th June 1945
My darling, it has rained all day and the mud is terrific. *Tháinic george agus crich anocht agus bhí comhairle maith again. Nuair a bheidh an bhfhár caitheamh beidh reunion again. Tá grádh mór agam ort, a Eibhlín. Beannacht Dia ort mo chailín dílis (George and Krish came tonight and we had a good chat. When the war is over we will have a reunion. I love you very much, Eileen. God bless you my faithful girl.)* [Irish in Gaelic script].

Friday 15th June 1945
My own darling, it has been a heavenly day and oh how I longed to be at home this day with you and all our dear ones. It is on such a day when the sun shines and the hills are so green and fresh that I long to be with you. I have my old stomach trouble again and so I am not having supper. There is a plague epidemic among the Koreans nearby. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 16th June 1945
Another glorious day my darling; I fasted for 30 hours and had supper, but it has cured me + the castor oil! Paddy gave me a tin of butter today *but* asked for cigarettes for it! Nair has plied me with tea all day long. I read Barrie's play "Dear Brutus" today and now I am starting "Quality Street". God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 17th June 1945
Moffat came back yesterday and brought two *leitirí ó finuchan agaus porter (letters from Finucane and Porter)* [Irish in Gaelic script]. They were happy and well. Darling, it is our day again and I am thinking of you in the throes of your exams at school and then glorious holidays by the sea. Oh my Eileen how I do miss you and all the precious time I am wasting in this prison camp. It seems criminal. God bless you, darling.

Monday 18th June 1945
My darling, the weather is glorious and oh what a difference it makes to life here. I had more trouble today because I refused to send sick men to work – they had been in the guard room for twenty days on half rations. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 19th June 1945
My own darling, I had such a lovely dream about home last night. Father, mother, all the family were so overjoyed at my return. It was Christmas time and we all went to Midnight Mass at the Poor Clare's convent. The convent gates looked magnificent with the graceful archway; the chapel was beautiful. And now I am awake and homesick. Have been giving injections for two days now. God bless you, my darling.

Wednesday 20th June 1945
My own darling, it has rained all day and oh I have been mad with *japs* [in Gaelic script] because they are now claiming the sick out to work. Nothing can madden me more than that and they know it well. Thank God it cannot last forever. God bless you, darling.

Thursday 21st June 1945
More rain today. I went out digging a deep latrine trench today and loved every moment of it. I am teaching English to Reuneker. Dreamed of you again. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 22nd June 1945
My darling, my tiny hands are blistered from digging this morning and afternoon. We have now dug down about 7 feet among mud and rocks. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 23rd June 1945
My own darling, I have been digging for hours today in the rain and oh I am tired. My hands are in an awful mess but I am happier because my day passes quickly. George went to work today. God bless you, darling.

Sunday 24th June 1945
Yasume day, and it has rained all the day. I had a very busy morning with sick parades and a meeting. The afternoon was spent in a cowshed teaching George English. Thank God I have found a friend in this camp – someone I can speak to and open my heart to; it is bad to have no friend. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 25th June 1945
My darling, I am more optimistic today than I have been for a long time. Sometimes I feel sad, isolated, and pessimistic, hidden away up in this valley in the hills. I have worked hard all day digging and at last the pit is nearly finished. The cover is now completed. There are many sick. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 26th June 1945
My darling, at 11 a.m. this morning I was informed that I had to pack and leave camp at noon to go to a new camp. Somehow I managed the packing assisted by Nair and Andler; had a mouthful of rice and dashed off to

march to the station with Andler, Lutter, and Nair + Umeki. All my men lined up outside and I shook hands with them all as I passed down the aisle – there was some weeping! Arrived in town we were passing the mine when all the boys broke loose and climbed out to say goodbye – George and Delhaye were in the lead. It broke me up. The trip was uneventful and I had a short walk at this end. The new camp[38] is a foul place – stinking and in a hollow. 150 weary British troops + 10 Americans from Taiwan are here. Their spirit is good; they are all gunners and I have met them before in Changi – 80th a/tk; 5 Field; 155 F. Regt; Signals. They are packed like sardines! I have the M.I. Room bed to sleep on. Five officers are here – have known them before. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 27th June 1945
My darling, I had a bad night. No sign of my two boxes yet. We had an air raid practice today. All patients + me in a tunnel. Many men sick. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 28th June 1945
My own darling, I have had a hectic day – many sick men tonight. Went to the Japanese hospital today to examine a stool for amoeba – it was positive too. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 29th June 1945
My own darling, I had a glorious scene with a guard this evening. He was beating up an American and I went for him much to the amazement of everyone! I have had a busy day – have checked all the medicines and they are in a sorry mess. God bless you darling.

Saturday 30th June 1945
My own darling, all my kit arrived today and oh it was funny to see it come in the gate and even more so when it was checked. A quieter day. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 1st July 1945
A busy day with medical inspections etc. Fewer men sick today. The weather is glorious. I had two notes from Krish yesterday – and he is very sad. God bless you, darling.

Monday 2nd July 1945
My darling, I did my washing this morning – shirt, trousers, and towel – and they have never been so clean before! I have been reading Krish's two letters again and I think he is very sad about my leaving. I sent notes to Max, Reuneker, and Nair through U – he was very nice about it; that was a few days ago. A quiet day. Read "The White Cliffs of Dover". God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 3rd July 1945
It has been a quiet day with no serious battles. God bless you, Eileen. Lt. Goat fixed my clock (yours) and my pocket watch.

Wednesday 4th July 1945
My own darling, I had another hectic evening defending the sick. I saw a man knocked down by a cruel blow today. This is the American Independence Day. God bless you, Eileen. I had coffee and cigarettes from an American.

[38] The new camp is Utashinai, also known as Hakodate #3-B.

Thursday 5th July 1945

My darling, won't you please tell me when this war will be over? It has gone on for ages it seems but I am prepared to wait till the end no matter how long that may be. The miners were kept out till 8.30 p.m. tonight from 6 a.m. this morning. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 6th July 1945

My own darling, we had a wonderful surprise tonight – 2/3 a parcel Red Cross each. Mysterious moves all day long – we cannot make it out! Rained all day. Miners came back at 8.30 p.m. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 7th July 1945

My own darling, I am now in a new camp[39]. All officers are now sleeping with the men in a new barrack room. There is a French-Canadian doctor here called Lynch. The hospital is poor. There are now 281 men here – 114 Americans and the rest British. They have come from China – Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Peking. There are four RAMC orderlies here. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 8th July 1945

My darling, we are only 2 kilometres from the old camp. It rains all day; the men come back from the mines at 8.30; supper 9 p.m.; tenko at 9.30; lights out at 10 p.m. Poor lads have to get up at 5 a.m. and the food is poor. There is not even time for sick parades. These lads bring wonderful tales from the south of the devastation. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 9th July 1945

My darling, rain all day; no work until late at night and then a mad rush and tumble into bed. What a place for mud. Good night & God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 10th July 1945

My darling, things are settling down wonderfully and our new camp should be quite good. New paths are made. Our camp is now 281 strong – 114 Americans (Marines from Wake and China)[40]. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 11th July 1945

Yasume Day, and the boys had a grand rest. The Americans' kit arrived in huge quantities. The nips were amazed. I read Oscar Wilde's "De Profundis". God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 12th July 1945

My own darling, I am still here for another Glorious 12th but please God the next one will be spent with you. There are 3 Irishmen in this barrack room. O'Toole, Kennedy, and Fitzgerald – we have some grand talks about Dublin, Croke Park! Darling, sometimes I find it hard to contain myself when I think of home and what I am missing with you. It seems *so* unfair to ask you to wait so long for me. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 13th July 1945

My own darling, the men are now on the night shift and they are having a rotten time – long hours. The 'newcomers' kit still pours in on us – terrific trunks etc. It is awful to see sick men being sent down the mines – I scream about it, but nothing happens. God bless you, Eileen.

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[39] This camp is Akabira, also known as Hakodate #2-B.

[40] These are the North China US Marines (who were captured in Peking, Tientsin, and Chinwangtao soon after the Pacific war started) and US Marines from Wake Island (who were captured there in December 1942).

Saturday 14th July 1945
My darling, air raids today for the first time on this island. We had to sit all day in a barrack room. A mad rush for sick parades in the evening. Morale is high. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 15th July 1945
Another day, sitting around in the barrack room but we realise that it is worthwhile, so we don't mind a bit. We suspect that the lads have arrived at last. God bless you, darling.

Monday 16th July 1945
My darling, it has been a glorious day. I dreamt it was all over and that I was on my way back home to you. One of the guards is seriously ill and so they try to blame us for it which is typical of them. He was sent to hospital in the morning. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 17th July 1945
My darling, the days go by quickly and my consolation is that they are bringing me nearer and nearer to you in every way. Even in this barrack room with 60 men I can still be alone with you. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 18th July 1945
Darling, an American Marine Corps Warrant Officer called Carlson gave me a lovely warm Red Cross overcoat today. The Americans have been more than generous with their clothing – they fixed all the British lads up well. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 19th July 1945
Another day nearer, Eileen. S. Maj. Davis, an American Marine, gave me a beautiful towel and two khaki handkerchiefs today. I am being spoiled. God bless you.

Friday 20th July 1945
The Japanese doctor has been here for two days checking Red Cross medicine, and hospital food. There has been much checked out which we shall never see. Total 126 boxes! What couldn't we do with that. God, bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 21st July 1945 (Yasume)
My darling, I had a present of two lovely silk handkerchiefs today from S. Maj. Davis. Chief Young gave me a small towel. I have so much stuff now. All men weighed today. I am now 74kg (-4kg in 1 month) and oh I am hungry! Things are better on sick parades since our complaint. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 22nd July 1945
My darling, I washed two sheets this morning! Please, Eileen, may I wash the sheets when we are married? Things are not very exciting, but I have time to love you. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 23rd July 1945
My own darling, I had a wonderful dream about you last night. There was a mine accident tonight and I did a perfect job on an American's face – 6 stitches. Lynch congratulated me on the neat work. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 24th July 1945
My darling, at last I have won my point and it is I who decides what men should go down the mine. Also there is something happening at last about sanitation. There is a lovely view from the camp – wooded hills, and a broad river which is one of the camp boundaries. I am optimistic these days. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 25th July 1945
My darling, maybe it is the glorious weather – day and night – but oh I am feeling more cheerful because I think the end cannot be far away now. I sat today for ages looking down at the river and dreaming of you. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 26th July 1945
My darling, I am studying psychology and surgery – the latter in case of emergency and the former in case I need it in practice later. It is good to know all about psychology especially when we have our own home and children. God bless you.

Friday 27th July 1945
30 men + 1 officer + Cpl. Lynch went off to work on a farm 10 miles away; they are due back on August 10th. The weather is glorious and I am still in love with you. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 28th July 1945
My darling, I am still terrifically optimistic and more so each day. The river brings me great consolation because then I can be alone with you and nature. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 29th July 1945
I did an expert extraction under local anaesthesia with bad forceps today. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 30th July 1945
My darling, the weather is glorious and so are my dreams. I am still hoping to be home for Christmas! Won't it be wonderful when it is all over. I often try to imagine what it will be like but it is too painfully lovely. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 31st July 1945
My darling, another day of glory, another month nearer to you. I have done five perfect dental extractions in the past four days. The local Japanese are amazed at my dexterity. My case of the mine injury to an American's (Timpany) face has healed perfectly and will leave no scar. I still love you darling. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 1st August 1945
Yasume Day and I have been working all day long! But I did have time this evening to visit my friend the river just at dusk. Thank God things are going well nowadays here. God bless you, Eileen. Two men escaped from the head camp and were away from 17th–25th July! We have been warned not to attempt to escape.

Thursday 2nd August 1945
My darling, I have the great luxury of a hot bath at 5.15 a.m. every morning. I am the only one who can be bothered. I am feeling much better these days. And oh what optimism is within my heart. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 3rd August 1945
Darling, I am kept busy defending the Americans here and I am doing alright. I am friendly with Sgt. Hall and Cpl. Timpany. They are both quite literary experts. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 4th August 1945
My darling, the weather is terrifically hot. I stitched another man this morning. The interpreter said that I had a very good record in Muroran. I shall always love you. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 5th August 1945
My own darling, I have been a bit blue today but that's only because I have not enough work to do. I put two stitches in a lad's scalp this morning – mine accident. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 6th August 1945
My darling, I think it is much nearer the end than anyone realises. The temperature is now 98°F – it's hot in this valley. God bless you.

Tuesday 7th August 1945
Oídhche indé chuaidh mé isteach ins an seómra agus stole an radió (Last night I went into the room and stole the radio) [Irish in Gaelic script]. I had a wonderful time and I was well supported by the Yanks – God bless them. I still adore you, Eileen. I shall adore you forever and ever. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 8th August 1945
Darling, I have fever and diarrhoea but have managed to keep out of bed. Had a night call last night – man fell down a 40ft shaft in the mine. Unconscious. Oh how I am longing to see you again, Eileen. God bless you, darling.

Thursday 9th August 1945
My darling, three air raid alarms today but no sign of any planes as yet. I am still going strong but feel a bit wobbly around the knees. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 10th August 1945
My darling, I have been sitting by the river and dreaming of you and home and the wonderful times that lie ahead of us. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 11th August 1945
My own darling, it has been rest day and I feel much better. I am on a course of carbasone. One of the lads gave me a Chesterfield cigarette this morning. I lay in the sun during the afternoon and loved it. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 12th August 1945
My own darling, we had a bit of excitement today when a lad called Miles pretended to go mad and escape. He ran amok in the camp. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 13th August 1945
My darling, it has been cold and miserable and oh it is on such a day that I feel a prisoner. But I am nearer to you than ever before. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 14th August 1945

I aspirated fluid from Nelson's chest this morning – he has bad pleurisy. The 30 gardeners came back from the country this morning – Capt. Lynch and Chavey are here. They had a rotten time in the country. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 15th August 1945 (Assumption)

A quiet day darling, and oh I do feel you nearer to me. It will be all over soon. Pray hard. God bless you, Eileen. The Emperor made a speech at noon today and oh it means a lot. Capt. Francis and I were called to the office and told that the mine work would cease forthwith! The reason given was that there is a typhus epidemic outside. Of course this is rubbish! Darling, *I* diagnosed that the war was over! Oh what wonderful news if it is true. The miners brought back the same news. The street lights are now lit up. No air raid alarms. Gramophone 6 hours daily. New library and games; good food; new officers' mess!!

Thursday 16th August 1945

My darling, the evidence grows and grows. The guards admit that the war is over! We are overjoyed and though we have not got definite news we are in grand spirits. I cannot really believe that it is all over and that soon we shall be together. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 17th August 1945

My own darling, I had four wonderful cards from you this evening – Dec. 22nd '44, February 25th, March 17th and 26th. Oh how very, very happy I am this night. My cup of joy is overflowing. More and more evidence becomes available. Darling, you know that I shall be home to you as soon as ever I possibly can. The trains are lit up; no black out. Up at 6 a.m.; bed at 9 p.m.! God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 18th August 1945

My own darling, the evidence grows and grows – all men now have vitamins daily. I had a grand time giving evidence of Y's misdeeds – stealing etc. The lads are all excited. I have tried to picture what your feelings are now. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 19th August 1945

My own darling, today we were given Red Cross parcels – one between 10 men. The lads went wild with delight. The medical office and store were handed over to me today as a result of my indictment of the nip medical staff – the latter have cleared out. The suspense is becoming awful and it must be even worse for you, Eileen. I lay awake for hours at night thinking of you and our future. I just want to see you again as soon as possible. Darling, you will not now be going back to Omagh again because soon you will be Mrs. Murray. I love you, God bless you Eileen.

Monday 20th August 1945

My own darling, I had two hours sleep last night – all the time thinking of you and home. Then began a hectic day which has just ended at 8 p.m. Sick parades; dental extraction; minor operation – removal of a cyst from a lad's face – I did a perfect job. He had no pain and went around showing everyone the cyst. I played some baseball with Matthews and had some shot putting. Then came endless writing up of medical records and ending with checking and sorting dental equipment. And all the time I have been dreaming of you, my darling, and our plans. I should love to live at Beechwood if that is at all possible; if not, well then I should consider Felix's proposal to join up with him. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 21st August 1945

My own darling, we had confirmation that the war is over. The boys went wild with joy but it left me unmoved because I was always convinced. I hope for your sake, Eileen, that you will not be kept long in suspense about my safety. You know how I feel. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 22nd August 1945

My own darling, the commandant gave two bottles of beer to the officers last night! Oh what a change – what sweetness! All the Americans are asking for my address today and we have many invitations to New York, Florida, California, Iowa, etc. It is all very flattering as I have only known them a few weeks. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 23rd August 1945

My darling, Umeki came today and confirmed the news. They had awful trouble at Muroran camp – the men broke loose and raped women in local houses. There were demonstrations in plenty. He said we should be leaving here in about 1 week's time. God bless you darling.

Friday 24th August 1945

Yesterday the men became very troublesome and demanded more food and cigarettes. Luckily their requests were granted. Today was outstanding. This morning we were all on parade and Tendo told us the war was over and would we drink a toast with him. All the men agreed thank God except one, and we all drank sake to our victory. Then we gave 3 cheers for the Allies; followed by The King and The Star Spangled Banner, while the Union Jack and the Stars and Stripes were unfurled. It was a wonderful scene. Then the Americans had their flag unfurling ceremony. Later the British had theirs. I was in command of the unfurling ceremony and gave all the orders. Then Col. Emoto arrived and was given a big reception. He made a speech and we all drank beer as a toast. In his speech he paid great tribute to a certain Major Murray and I knew you would be proud, Eileen, to hear that I had done my job well. Then we had lunch (the officers) with Col. Emoto and Tendo. It was a no-rice meal with lots of beer and good conversation. I sat at his right hand. Then we had some songs – mostly community singing. I sang "Mountains of Mourne" and "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms". The Col. said we would meet again at Hakodate before we embarked in the near future. He took a letter to Dr. Andler for me. We now have 10 cigarettes a day, lots of food, more beer tonight. We put 3 large PW signs on our roofs with our flags. We are to expect American planes from tomorrow with Red Cross food which will be dropped by parachute! The boys are excited. Jimmy Hall and I are great friends now. All the time I am loving you more and more as the time draws near. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 25th August 1945

My own darling, nothing much today. No planes came but the boys were waiting. We had meat pasties and jam rolls tonight! It is awful to see the Japanese kow-towing to me. I joined a sing song in the barrack room tonight. I love you. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 26th August 1945

My own darling, I saw today American planes for the first time. They dropped Red Cross food on my old camp and on the officers' camp. We expect to have our parcels tomorrow. The lads were very disappointed. This waiting is becoming very irksome, and I am longing more and more to be with you. Darling, the journey will take about 1 month – isn't that terrible? Please meet me as arranged. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 27th August 1945

Darling, it rained all day long; no planes came. The men are calling out for cigarettes; no word of our release. We had each a tin of oranges last night; four doughnuts tonight. Oh this waiting is awful, Eileen. A stock cable was sent today. God bless you.

Tuesday 28th August 1945

My darling, this has been the most wonderful day since I became a prisoner. This morning I had three cards from you, and one letter; card from your daddy, and my father sent a letter. Darling, I am so glad you received my letter, my cards, and my broadcast message. I had a letter from Max Andler who sent your letters here. And then came 5 B29's flying low over the camp and dropped a terrific amount of food, chocolate, candy, cigarettes and everything you could think of to eat, boots and clothing. Alas the food killed a Korean woman and seriously injured another; five others injured too. That rather damped our ardour; but oh those planes were lovely. I have eaten chocolate and candy till I was sick. I have smoked Camels, Chesterfields, and Lucky Strikes; we have read Time and Life magazines. We had whiskey tonight too. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 29th August 1945

My darling, I had a narrow escape from drowning today in the river. Some lads were stranded on the other side of the river. I volunteered to swim across with 3 other boys with a line. We reached them in spite of the terrifically strong current; however the line broke and I was swept downstream with another boy clinging to the line. Can you image such force which made it impossible to hold on to the line? All this time I was filling up with water! I just made the near bank in the nick of time – exhausted. Having good time. God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 30th August 1945

My darling, the planes came today again and dropped lots of food – breakfast, lunch and supper rations, fruit salads, cigarettes, chocolate, gum, tobacco etc., etc. The parachutes were all lovely colours and thank God nobody was hurt this time. The men are in terrific form. The amount of clothing I have is unbelievable now. The International Red Cross Delegate, with Swiss and Swedish consuls came today and we had talks with them. We are to leave next week. God bless you, Eileen. Cables are to be sent as soon as we embark at Hakodate. We are all to receive souvenirs before we leave Japan. Good night darling.

Friday 31st August 1945

My darling, we were allowed outside the camp today to a football ground. There was a game of baseball and I joined in with the Americans. I was the only one to make a home run. Then I had a spot of football and did well. The locals were delighted. All the children had chewing gum and were happy. I gave 1000cc intravenous dextrose to Paddy Kennedy this morning. Diagnosed two amoebic dysentery cases. What a day. Had my snap taken 4 times today – twice with the officers and twice with Jimmy Hall, Lairson, Monk, and Paul Farr[?]. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 1st September 1945

My darling, I had a glorious outing today on a truck. Went to Nisi Asibetsu to the officers' camp with clothing. Met Lt. Cmdr. Polkinghorn, Commander of the Peterel, two Royal Scots officers, an Australian Colonel, and all the American officers – Col. Ashurst and Major Brown. An Aussie priest (Irish) was there too and he gave me a letter from Fr. O'Mahoney. The former has not got any Mass equipment. Then we went to my old camp with the priest. Darling, I had a very wonderful reception from the boys – the whole camp turned out and cheered without ceasing and everyone shook hands with me. The Americans with me were amazed and have told all the people here about it. Dr. Andler was much thinner; Nair and Reuneker were very happy to see me and so was Delhaye. Borski and Lutter alone remain. They have the radio going all day and night and have the latest San

Francisco news. Hirate had sent a sergeant to the head camp to demand my transfer to his camp again! I would dearly love to go back again. Paddy McElligott was there to welcome me and so was Porter (my small pox case). Oh I felt so very homesick and yet I was torn between two loyalties – these boys want me to stay here! We did not stay long. Andler gave me last night's news bulletin which thrilled the boys here. The drive in the green countryside made me happy and long to be home with you to experience the joys of freedom. The lads had been to town and bought souvenirs. It has been a glorious day – two cards from you, Eileen, at the old camp dated January and April. I love you more than ever. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 2nd September 1945 (Anne's Birthday)

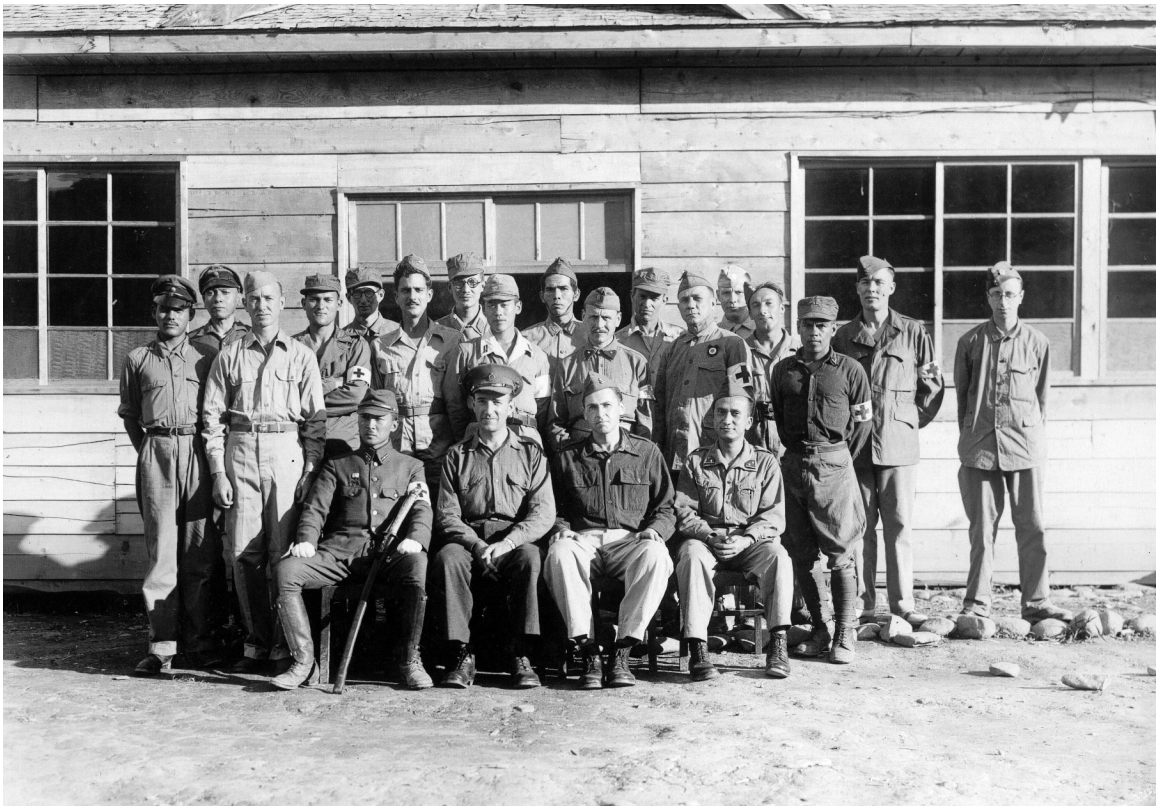
My own darling, I am in Nisi Asibetsu again. I came here this afternoon with Lt. Reeve and though I had no luggage I decided to stay here permanently! This morning at Akabira the Japanese staff and guards left our camp and told us we were no longer prisoners. And now I am here with the boys and they are happy. Andler, Nair, Borski, and I went to the company's club in the town tonight; had a terrific dinner under beautiful conditions. The company (Mitsui Co.) manager, and directors were all present. Speeches and toasts were made. We had whiskey, beer, rum etc.; cocktails; crème-de-menthe. The dinner sets were really beautiful – chinaware and lacquer. We came back at 10 p.m. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 3rd September 1945

My darling, I had a hectic day – sick parades, clothing, hospital. Gerry Matthews arrived this morning with all my things, bless him. He wanted to stay, poor lad. Chavey and Thoroughgood came with him. We gave him good coffee. He saw immediately that I was needed here. We had several officers to visit us today – all American pilots and grand chaps. At 4 p.m. we all paraded and hoisted the British, American, and Dutch flags; and sang the national anthems. There was a morning parade when Dr. Andler handed over to me again. I made a speech and said how happy and proud I was to see them again; I was proud of their good discipline and order. I asked them to keep it up and show the nips that we were civilized and that there would be no incidents until we had boarded our ship at Hakodate. I proposed to arrange organised walks with a W.O. in charge of each party. This proved a great success. There are swimming parties also. We had our photographs taken – I with two parts of the British troops and once with the hospital staff and Group 5. Darling I have my own room now and so Nair and George had cocoa with me tonight. God bless you, Eileen.



Frank (seated with cap at centre) with the men of Group 5 (or 6). David Marshall (see Postscript) is the man with the pipe standing behind him. (Credit: Gwilym Rowlands)



The medical staff at Raijo (known to the men as Nisi Asibetsu). Frank (second from left on front row) seated next to Max Andler (third from left). (Credit: Gwilym Rowlands)

Tuesday 4th September 1945

My darling, another day of waiting and now it appears we must wait till 9th before we can hope to leave. Anyhow I am having a chance of writing up the atrocity history of this camp. Gerry Matthews came today with my mess gear. More planes have been over the other camp today; so we are expecting a windfall tomorrow. I have Reuneker and Nair with me every night for a couple of hours and it is good for me. Umeki had cocoa with us tonight. The big party is due tomorrow night. Umeki has promised to buy me a souvenir in Sapporo tomorrow. Darling, I am longing to be with you and see you again. How about our honeymoon? It will be too cold to have one at home. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 5th September 1945

My darling, another hectic day. New football pitch laid out and a match was played this afternoon among two groups. A new case of amoebic dysentery – McIntosh Whyte. Medical officers and orderlies were given a wonderful dinner at the club tonight. I sang "Mountains of Mourne" and "Believe Me If All Those Endearing Young Charms". God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 6th September 1945

My darling, a B29 came this morning and dropped two loads of food with beautiful parachutes. None were damaged. Awful trouble with Col. Ashurst on the phone. Max went down to him and was almost arrested by him – they want some of the food and every camp has had much more than these boys here. Darling, the proudest moment of my life came at 5 p.m. this evening when 350 men paraded and gave me an address. It is a beautiful document signed by all the men and I shall always treasure it[41]. Three truck loads of beer biscuits, sake, meat, and food came from Sapporo today. At 7 p.m. tonight Hirate handed over all his rifles, swords, and bayonets + equipment to Capt. Borski, Dr. Andler, and myself. Tonight George, Krish, and I had a party – fruit pudding,

[41] This is the testimonial drafted by David Marshall (see Postscript and Appendix D).

beer, sake, cigarettes, peaches and tinned oranges. Hirate presented each officer with a nice picture with a red lacquer frame. It will be a lovely souvenir. Please pray that our wait will not be long. God bless you, Eileen.

Friday 7th September 1945

My darling, I had a terrific day. Dr. Andler went off to Sapporo this morning. We took over the camp formally today and signed for everything. Sick parades and visiting officers rather upset my morning – not to mention many petty cases of discipline. I went to the Chinese camp this afternoon; demanded that it be handed over to the Chinese officers; asked for some food and clothing. Lt. Lewis gave me great help with his report on our visit. Conditions were appalling. I examined all its hospital patients, and promised them medicine. We hope to give them some clothing and cigarettes tomorrow morning. Those poor creatures were so glad to see us. A truck load of clothing arrived tonight from the main camp. I rang up Capt. Baumgartner this morning and invited him to come here for a day. I discovered that they received *no* red Cross medicines at the main camp – there were 120 boxes at Akabira. Reuneker and Nair had apple wine, beer, biscuits, butter, gum, and cigarettes with me tonight. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 8th September 1945

My darling, this morning I had early sick parade and set off with our party to the Chinese camp with clothing, cigarettes, and sweets, etc. We had a terrific welcome. All the stuff was dumped in the square and divided. Then we conferred in the office with the Japs and the Chinese officers. They agreed to more food – rice issue; the vegetable garden to be handed over to the Chinese for their own use; 320 uniforms to be issued; medical treatment to be improved; more frequent baths; that the Chinese hoist their national flag over the camp. I went to the hospital armed with dressings and medicines; I fixed them up as best I could; gave them some canned meat, etc. They were very happy. Then we had the flag ceremony when 400 Chinese in perfect order lined up with their officers and NCO's in front; 30 British with myself in front. All saluted as the flag was slowly hoisted. Chinese then sang their national anthem; gave 3 cheers. All were then dismissed amid great jubilation. A messenger came from camp to say that Wynd, Capt. Brown, and Capt. Baumgartner had arrived in camp. I dash off with Nair and met them. They had arrived in the Colonel's car! All were in grand spirits. Major Wilson and another Australian Captain were also with us – + Lt. Lewis of the U.S. Air Corps. All stayed to lunch and we had a grand time with my frittered pumpkin. Capt. Brown did some dental work and all went off at 2.30 p.m. Lt. Lewis remained to make a report on the Chinese camp. Three more American officers arrived and were given cocoa and biscuits + butter! Nair is busy feeding all these people nowadays. Phone call from Sapporo – Max is in Grand Hotel – coming back tonight. Staying in the club tonight! I am allowing all the men to visit town on a pass starting tomorrow morning; we are to have an M.P. guard in town daily. Nair, George, and I had beer, biscuits and butter tonight. We have wonderful evenings together – and sometimes I wish they would last even at the expense of living here. It is growing colder each day – thank God we shall not see the winter here. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 9th September 1945

My darling, Dr. Andler came back this morning in awful rain. He was laden with pictures. Umeki carried back my ¥700 sword. The blade of it is beautiful but the rest of it is poor. Reuneker gave me a lovely Ainu black bear. We had the CE padre to lunch; he had a service in the afternoon. I visited the Chinese camp in the afternoon with Ian and Hayes. Things are very good up there nowadays. They are all very happy. Umeki presented me with a fan. I also have a saki bowl; Sgt. Murphy gave me some lovely photos of Ainu. Reuneker and Nair were here tonight and we have a lively evening with sake, and biscuits (+ butter). And Reuneker has written you a lovely letter of introduction. Good night & God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 10th September 1945

My darling, we are on the move in a day or two. 200 men + patients & Dr. Andler are standing by ready to move by train to Tsetowe whence we will be flown to Yokohama; then flown to Manila via Okinawa! Then home by air. Isn't it wonderful, Eileen, to think that I shall be seeing you soon again? I have sat up all night waiting with Reuneker and Nair for the move, but the American officers did not show up. God bless you, Eileen.

Tuesday 11th September 1945

My darling, the boys went off today right as rain. Many planes came over today and dropped coffee, milk, sugar, 500 packets of cigarettes – also a transmitter-receiver radio. We communicated with them by air. They gave a wonderful display. Then came the relief men – Major Miles, and an Aussie captain & a sergeant. They gave us all the dope. And now we are due to leave tomorrow evening at 6 p.m.; plane leaves at noon on Thursday. Chinese camp in wonderful condition. It was a wonderful achievement for me darling. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 12th September 1945

My own darling, this has been a hectic day of packing and departing. I have been on the run all day and so many things happened that I could not begin to tell you about it. Loaded all baggage in train; sent surplus kit and parachutes to Mitsui company stores. Then came 2 B29's and dropped 4 loads of food which we collected by means of 200 Chinese and put on the train. One load was dropped in town and I went after it with George & Delhaye in the truck. Then I visited the Chinese hospital with my two lads and oh what a sorry show that place and these poor men are in. I did what I could and dashed back to camp. Then I gave the Chinese all the old British Army great coats + all the food in our store (rice, etc.). The nips were furious and begged a couple of socks for their staff. George, Nair, and I entertained the Chinese officer in my room and gave him my carpet + lots of other stuff. Having emptied the camp we set off – I leading with the American & British flags flying beside me. We went to the station in small trucks; entrained and set sail at 12.10 a.m. Oh what a wonderful feeling this is now. I am *really* free at last. God bless you, Eileen.





Left: Frank Murray at Sapporo (Chitose) Aerodrome preparing to be flown to Yokohama. Right: Lt. Edmunds of the Royal Marines, also at Sapporo Aerodrome. Lt. Edmunds took most of the photographs at Sapporo and sent them to Frank.

Thursday 13th September 1945

My darling, I am writing this note from Yokohama aerodrome! We arrived here by air (C46) this evening at 5 p.m. The weather was very rough, stormy; and much fog. We were in grave danger for some time but the pilot managed a perfect landing. Six of our planes turned back to Hokkaido – one included George's. The Japanese airfield at Sapporo is a terrific size. Six Grumman dive bombers arrived with Press agents and a British naval officer from a destroyer. The latter was a treat to see after all these years – so suave and polished; there was a Marine officer here too. Then came that wonderful journey – 41 of us in that huge plane. Men were vomiting all over the place but the trip left me unmoved! Hirate and all his boys were at Sapporo to say goodbye to us as we moved off. And now I have washed, shaved and bathed. All is set for Okinawa tomorrow morning. And thence to Manila. I am sending a note to my best girl. God bless her.

Friday 14th September 1945

My darling, I am writing this note from Okinawa by candlelight as I sit on my canvas bed in an officers' tent in a large camp for ex-P.O.W.'s. We had a 5 ½ hours trip from 10 a.m. till 3.30 p.m. – it was lovely. There I met my first white woman in 3 ½ years – Lt. Mary J. Coughlin of the U.S. Army Medical Corps! She was the hostess on the plane. Her father is from Cork and her mother from Kerry. She was looking for Catholics and found me – gave me Rosary beads; has a sister a nun. And now I am dead beat and sweating in this semi-tropical climate. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 15th September 1945

My darling, I am still at Okinawa. This morning at 3 a.m. we were turfed out of bed and paraded prior to leaving the island by plane. However the quota had been reached before my turn came and I was sent back to bed with many others. I was very disappointed. I spent the day looking out for our Hakodate lads to arrive but they did not turn up. I wanted so much to see George again. We had bacon & eggs, coffee, and doughnuts, ice cream and coca cola, etc., etc. You have no idea what all this means to us P.O.W.'s after rice t.i.d. for 3 ½ years. Darling, I am sorry at all this delay in getting home but I have absolutely no say in it at all. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 16th September 1945

Darling, still in Okinawa! Got up at 3 a.m. and was driven off to the airfield in a downpour of rain. We boarded a B24 bomber (Consolidated); donned chutes and wore vests, but the trip was cancelled because a typhoon was approaching. We were soaked to the skin on the return journey to camp. Had a cold meal – no change of clothing; everything wet through. And then came the most awful experience in the tent when the typhoon struck us. Many tents were blown away! Rain penetrated everywhere! I am off to bed and it is only 6 p.m. God bless you, Eileen.

Monday 17th September 1945

Darling, I had an awful night in this tent but things are more settled now and it only rains at intervals. Crozier, Moffat, and Delhaye have moved into my tent. Lots of magazines, chocolates, coca cola, ice cream etc. But I want to be back home with you, Eileen. God bless you, darling.

Tuesday 18th September 1945

My darling, I am still in Okinawa but I am still alive. Many PW's have been killed in air crashes on their way here; ships have struck mines, etc. I still feel like a prisoner here. Went to a show tonight – the atrocity films about German prisoners. Met Lt. Smith and Major Jordan. My Eileen, you must be worried silly but I cannot send any message from here – I am always told to wait till I get to Manila. I had a visit from a 6ft 4" priest from San Antonio (Texas) – Fr. Vincente. He was wonderful, Eileen. I went to confession standing outside the tent! And now I am prepared and happy for the next stage of my journey home to you. We are nearly sure to move tonight. God bless you, Eileen.

Wednesday 19th September 1945

Darling, I am now in a British officers' camp near Manila. Thank God we had no accident – we heard of one plane landing in the sea. With the usual American efficiency we were whisked off from Okinawa in a B24 – four engined bomber – at 10 a.m. and reach Clark Field Aerodrome at 3.30 p.m. The co-pilot was half-Irish (Jameson) and so he allowed me to spend the trip in the cockpit with him. He fed me rather too well because I was *Irish*! We had a perfect take off and a lovely landing. It's a big job with 25 men + kit on board. We had supper at Clark Field and then left by train for this camp which was reached at 2 a.m.! The Filipinos were crowding all the stations selling "ba-na-nas Joe"! God bless you, Eileen.

Thursday 20th September 1945

My darling, I am in this huge camp teeming with British and Australian officers. I have met dozens of people I have known in the past. Here we had cigars, given twice daily; beer three times; chocolate; good food. I am quartered with Capt. Gibbs R.A.M.C. I met all my boys from Muroran today and they gave me a great reception. Nair also I met and he visited me twice today. I have just seen and heard Gracie Fields in person at a theatre a few yards away from my tent. She sang "Danny Boy" and oh how it made me feel homesick. Darling, I sent you a cable today and am now writing an Air mail card. God bless you, my Eileen.

Friday 21st September 1945

My darling, I have had a wonderfully happy day. It began with Mass and Communion at the lovely bamboo & rattan chapel in camp. Then I had my interrogation which lasted 5 hours. I gave the whole story. Then I got some clothing – having been soaked to the skin waiting in a queue. Then I dashed off to the Post Office and got all the Hakodate mail sorted; and so the boys will all have letters tomorrow morning at 8 a.m. And my darling I was allowed to collect my own mail – one from you, Margaret, and Kay O'Connor. I am so happy tonight, Eileen. All I want now is to get away from here quickly and get home to you and all our dear ones. I had Capt. Adams in tonight. I met my little Cambridge mathematical genius today; he said that *my fame* had spread as far as his camp in South Japan! Darling, I wanted only you to know this because it would make you happy. I am to be medically examined tomorrow morning. This officers' camp is pathetic – a lot of old men only interested in No.1 (themselves). I have tried to interest some of them in the *men* of their unit who were in Muroran, but in vain; they are not interested in their men at all and it maddens me. I have had scores of boys to see me today. Darling, I met Fr. Kennedy today and oh I was glad to see him – and he to see me again. Many people still come to see me and shake my hand. I don't know why. They all want to be my friend now. I had a talk with some boys who were in England 3 weeks ago – they say it is awful and very happy to be here. Fr. Kennedy and I may go into Manila soon by car to see the Jesuits and Redemptorists there. I have seen nothing of the Filipinos or the Philippines as yet. And now I must write you another letter. God bless you, Eileen.

Saturday 22nd September 1945

My darling, I am still in Manila and there is still no word of a ship arriving to take us away. I sent you off a long cable this morning. Alas it has to go all the way to Melbourne before being transmitted to you, darling. I should get two months' leave on my return home – and that would be ideal for our wedding and honeymoon. I was at Mass and Communion as usual this morning and you will never know how I prayed for you. I bought some towels for you today and pyjamas for myself. Many boys came to see me this evening. My medical examination is now over; I am 6ft 0 ¼ ins; 168lbs; 36" chest -> 41" expanded; waist 29 ½"! The Australian nurses thought I was a caveman. I had typhoid, cholera, and smallpox inoculations. And now I have fever and am ready to say goodnight to you once again. God bless you, Eileen.

Sunday 23rd September 1945

My own darling, I am closing this letter at long last. Have you ever received a 226-page letter from anyone before? I have not written all the things I would like to – the Japanese cruelties, my own feelings about things. I have had good times and bad times, but all the time I was loving you with all my heart and soul. It was your love which kept me alive all these weary years – your love and your prayers. God has been so very good to me and to you, and we shall never be able to repay His Goodness to us both. You, Eileen, have suffered more than I because you did not know what was happening to me; whereas my big worry was about the mental anguish which I was causing you. I have seen so many poor lads fall by the wayside during the past 3 ½ years and yet I have been spared. Alas their loved ones have not been informed of their deaths as yet, and they are still writing to them. Darling, we shall *never* forget what He has done for us. I shall write to you every day until we meet again. Please understand and forgive some of this long diary; at times I was too weary and crushed to write more than a couple of lines; but I had to write something and pray for you each day. I have so much to tell you that is not written down here, that it may take years in the telling.

Please God we shall be married as soon as ever possible after my return home. I intend living at Beechwood – do you like the idea, Eileen? We may start a practice there + a surgery on Old Park. I cannot make any definite plans until I get home. I do not intend staying in the Army, unless compelled to do so. We can do so much more in civilian life. Felix wrote and said that he might require assistance, but I would rather we lived at Beechwood and had our own practice. If the latter is not possible and if you wish it we could join up with Felix. I shall be like a fish out of water for some time, but you will understand as you always do. You have been my guiding star and you always will be.

I shall let you know when I leave here; also what our port of disembarkation in England. I am told that we shall be kept in a camp there for two days before we are allowed to go to our homes. Alas I cannot buy things I would like for you in the Far East. All the cities are a shambles and I am still not a free man. I still have to go where I am ordered.

Darling, how can I ever love you enough or thank you enough for what you have done for me while I have been away – your letters, your cards, your prayers, your love and prayers and loyalty. It has been a long, hard, cruel preparation for our marriage but it has been worthwhile. We have prepared with years of prayer and suffering and no two people in this world could have prepared better.

I had a quiet, peaceful, happy dream about you last night, Eileen. You were radiant with joy and smiling all the while. Never have you been so happy. Darling, I am sorry about all this delay in getting home to you, but alas I have no say in the matter at all. I could not send a cable from Hokkaido – I did but doubt very much if it will ever reach you. I had a terrific job clearing up the camp before we left, and I was on the trot all day long. Thank God it is all over now and I can relax a little. I still visit the lads scattered all over this camp and they do appreciate it.

I have not seen Manila yet, but they say it has been razed to the ground by the Japs. The climate is awful – seems to rain all day long and oh it is so sticky too. I have many small treasures, but they can wait till I get home. I intend cabling 'Pindi about my luggage, and have it sent home.

And now I must say adieu until we meet again. I pray God that all these letters will reach you safely.

God bless you, Eileen,

All my love,

Frank. xxxxxx etc. etc.

(was not allowed to put x's when I was POW!)

P.S. You know that I shall hurry home as fast as possible. My love to all at home – Father, Philip, Anne, Maureen, Margaret, Una; Daddy, Mammie, Felix and Mona, Fergus, Hugh[42], Mairead[43], Josephine, Mattie, Joe, May,

[42] Hugh is Hugh O'Kane, Eileen's brother.

[43] Mairead is Mairead O'Kane, Eileen's sister. She joined the order of the Medical Missionaries of Mary.

Frances and Roland, Mollie, Nan and Gerry and all others – God bless them because they are wonderful people all.

Forever yours,

Frank xxxxxx

etc.

Chapter 5:
On The Way Home

Yokohama,
Thursday, September 13th 1945

My own darling,

At last I am a free man after 3 ½ long years of captivity. My thoughts are naturally of you on this great day of my life – they have been with you every day. I have written to you daily during my captivity and soon I shall send this long letter to you. I can scarcely realise that the long weary days of waiting are over for us and that soon we shall be together again. We were flown down from Sapporo to here this afternoon. Tomorrow we fly to Okinawa and possibly to Manila if the weather is good. Today was my first trip on a plane and I loved it. I have no idea what will happen to me after my stay in Manila but I gather that we are to be sent home by the quickest route. So, my darling, do not dash off to the Far East until you are sure that I am to stay out here for some time.

And how have you been during these awful years of weary anxiety. Oh if I could only have told you not to worry about me and put your mind at rest. I sent a cable to father today as he is my next-of-kin. I shall cable you and write you at every available opportunity – from Okinawa, Manila, etc. Give my love to mammie, daddy, Felix, Mona, Fergus, Hugh, Mattie, Josephine, Mairead, Joe, May, Frances, Roland, Gerry and Nan – also Molly! Tell them that I shall be surely home for this Christmas.

My darling, please keep a light in the window for me, and you may be sure that I shall hurry home to you as fast as ever I can.

God bless you, Eileen,
All my love,
Forever yours,
Frank xxx

P.S. Darling, the Americans have been wonderful in getting us all away so quickly. They have treated us regally since the surrender of Japan. B29, and Navy planes have been dropping food and clothing on all our camps almost every day.

Frank.

Tuesday,
[18th] September 1945

My own darling,

I am growing weary of staying here – and little news about any move in the near future. I have heard that I *might* leave Manila next Friday on H.M.S. Indomitable – an aircraft carrier. This ship is due to reach Vancouver on October 17th. Then four days would be spent on the train across Canada, followed by the boat across the Atlantic. That should complete my trip around the world which began on January 9th 1940! Darling, I really should not complain about this delay in getting home to you because there are so many thousands of released men to be taken home. Besides we are being treated like kings by the Americans and Australians. We have good

accommodation, excellent food, free beer, soft drinks, chocolate, two packets of Chesterfields, four cigars, tobacco, shows, cinema, trips to Manila – all free, Eileen. They are doing their very best by us here. Oh, my darling, I am not ungrateful, but can you blame me for wanting to be back home quickly to you. If I had wings I would fly to you this moment.

I have been in Manila today for the first time and what an awful sight it presented. All the large buildings have been wrecked – mostly burned by the Japs. Yet the people seem to be happy enough. The men are not attractive but the women are very pretty, well dressed, and graceful. I visited the military hospital and saw some of the men I knew in Singapore. They are all longing to be home again.

Just a small thing about my prison life – I have carried with me day and night in my cigarette case your smiling self, your miraculous medal, a lock of your hair, *and* a four leafed shamrock! Not to mention a St. Francis medal. How could anything happen to me? And yet my darling, it could easily have been God's will that I should not return to you. Darling, I wanted so much and prayed that you would not suffer while I was in a prison camp. I have been lucky – I was not even beaten once while in Japanese hands, and not many could say that. Yet I was intensely anti-Jap and they knew it.

Give my congratulations to Frances and Roland on their new addition to the family. I know thy will be overjoyed. Give my love to *all* at Spring Villa, Felix and Mona, Mollie, and Gerry. Tell them I shall be home soon. I am still worried in case they are disappointed in me – the fact that you love me seems to be sufficient reason for them to love me too.

Adieu, my darling, and may God and His Holy Mother watch over you always for your
Ever loving Frank.

P.S. I have sent you 2 letters which took 3 1/2 years to write! There you will find reading material to last you until I come home. All my love, Frank.

Manila, P.I.,
Thursday, September 20th 1945

My own darling,

I arrived here in the early hours of this morning. I came by air from Okinawa in a four-engined American bomber (B24) and had a lovely trip. I have now travelled 2,000 miles by plane from Hokkaido and have enjoyed it. I am in very good health – you will be disappointed if you expect your long-lost lover to be a skeleton. Our camp in Hokkaido had no bombing; we had left Muroran before it was bombed and shelled.

Darling, this is an awful note but my feelings and my thoughts are in a terrible jumble. I cannot yet realise that I am a free man – I can only realise that I have loved you more and more each day of my POW life. I shall *never* be able to make up to you for all the worry and anxiety I have caused you, but, my darling, you shall have my *all* forever and ever.

I have met dozens and dozens of officers and men. They all want to shake me by the hand and be my friend. I have met many Americans in prison and I liked them best of all. They all have my address; they all want to visit us and meet my new wife! Darling, I made a point of making no distinction about the *colour* of my friends. You will meet George Reuneker, a Javanese; Krish Nair, an Indian; and Tan Chen Oon, a Chinese; Jimmy Hall, an American; Paddy McElligott, Irish.

I have so much to tell you, that more letters could never cope with it. I have written to you every day, so that now I have a letter of 250 pages awaiting dispatch to you. Darling, don't forget to meet me at Southampton. Please do what you can to speed up our marriage, so that we can be married as soon as possible after my return and go off on our honeymoon, Eileen; what do you think of a honeymoon in U.S.A. or the Far East; it will be cold at home. Your daddy told me of your horse-riding exploits. You have done too much praying for me, and I do not

deserve it. You have been so loyal to me all these years – and in return you have had my poor loyalty too and all my love. So many of the lads and officers in the prison camp have been let down by their wives and fiancées at home. You should hear what my friends say about you, Eileen; they say that you must be one girl in a million to keep loving me so faithfully all these weary years. Thank God we realise what a wonderful love is ours and what privileges God has bestowed upon us. We can never thank Him enough but we shall have a good try.

I shall be at Mass and Communion every morning since I came here. This morning was the first time since last Christmas and oh how I have missed it. I must start another card immediately. Give my love to everyone at Beechwood, Spring Villa, and all.

God bless you, Eileen,

All my love,

Forever yours, Frank.

Sunday,
September 23rd 1945

My own darling,

This part of the long letter was overlooked – I have so many papers around me!

One of our boys arrived from Okinawa last night states that my name is written up everywhere there; it was being shouted over the loud speaker. I wonder why I am in such urgent demand?

Still no signs of leaving here. Tell father I am writing him about finances etc.

All my love,

Ever yours,

Frank xxxxxx etc.

P.S. You could never have any idea of how generous the Americans have been to us. They have given us *every* thing you could think of. The Australians have been good too.

Your

Frank.

H.M.S. Glory
13th October 1945
At Sea

My own darling,

Here I am doing a Pacific cruise on an aircraft carrier (built in Belfast!). We are due at Pearl Harbour on 17th or 18th and I hope to have a chance of posting this note to you.

Well, my darling, at last I am under way and am speeding home to you at 20 knots per hour [sic]. I shall never forget that awful three weeks I had in Manila under canvas waiting for a boat. But thank God it is all passed and I am happy again. I sent you a vague telegram before leaving Manila – I had not enough cash to write "all my love".

Eileen, how I wish you could share this pleasure cruise with me. The ship is new, everything is good – and of course the deck space is terrific. I spend my day in a deck chair, just *thinking* – of you, our future happiness, my homecoming and what it means to us both. I promise you never to leave you again, Eileen, no matter what the future holds.

Darling, have you ever thought about my homecoming; what a back number I shall be in every way. I shall need much tuition from you to bring me up-to-date. I shall arrive home like a tramp – I have no clothes, Eileen. You will hardly recognise me when we meet again. I expect to reach Vancouver on 25th October(?), Halifax about 30th, and some English port about 8th of November. I shall cable you details of my arrival in England – date and place. Think you will have to wait in England for a couple of days while I am being "processed" by the Army. Then we shall return in triumph to our native land. Darling, have you any ideas about our honeymoon? I realise that travel is very difficult these days, but we shall manage somehow. We have so many places to go and so many things to do.

Give my love to all our loved ones at home and tell them not to forget the light in the window – because I shall be looking for it one of these nights soon.

I shall send you another note from Vancouver.

God bless you, darling,

All my love,

Ever your own Frank.



H.M.S. Glory was built by Harland & Wolff in Belfast and launched in November 1943.

H.M.S. Glory
24th October 1945
At Sea

My own darling,

I am still speeding across the blue Pacific and should reach Vancouver (Esquimalt to be exact) on the morning of Friday 26th. I feel like I never want to see the Pacific Ocean again as long as I live. However it is much cooler now that we are well in the Northern latitudes. Albatrosses have been following the ship for the last 1,000 miles! Darling, sometimes I think that I *shall never* reach home quickly enough. I am terribly impatient, because

I love you so much and because I have been away for such an age. I still have no idea of the date of my arrival home. I shall let you know as soon as I reach the east coast of Canada. It appears we have a five day train journey ahead of us; not to mention a few days in Vancouver, and a few at the other end + a few days in England! So cheer up my darling – I'll soon be home and we shall forget this eternal suspense and heart breaking waiting. All these years of preparation have not been in vain; we shall be all the more happy when we do meet again. Just one moment together and all the years of suffering and separation will be more than compensated for.

We reached Pearl Harbour on the morning of the 20th and spent 24 hours there. I had a lovely trip around the island (Oahu), through the mountains, along the beaches, and through Honolulu city. All the beaches except Waikiki appealed to me; and the city looked so clean and tidy after Manila – it was the first unbombed place I had seen. Hawaiian girls came on board in the evening and put on a show for us on the flight deck. They sang their haunting native songs and danced their graceful native dances, not in a vulgar way. The Hawaiians are very well educated but not so charming or pretty as the Filipinos.

My darling, if you have much difficulty in getting to England and back to Ireland when you propose to meet me, please do not bother, much as I would like you to meet the boat. I will have to spend a few days in a camp in England after my arrival, as I have already told you. However, if you find no difficulty in meeting me, then I want you to come more than anything in the world.

Darling, I have been wondering if you will continue teaching until the Christmas holidays? What will the nuns and children do when you leave them? What will happen to the Geography results? What will I do if you teach until Christmas? (selfish again!) I leave everything to you, Eileen; – our wedding day, our honeymoon. I have been thinking about Eire for the latter; or the South of England (Devon). We shall be happy no matter where we decide to go.

As I am on the move nowadays, I do not expect any mail from you. Please pray that I shall have more patience during the next couple of weeks travelling. You know that you have all of me forever and ever – only you can know how much I love you, Eileen.

Give my love to *all* at home.

God bless you, darling,

All my love,

Frank.

MPO 1103,
Victoria,
Canada,
27th October

My own darling,

I arrived here yesterday afternoon and oh what a wonderful place this is. We had a terrific reception as we came into the harbour – all the ships sirens sounded their welcome and the crowds cheered and waved for hours on end. I saw several glad reunions and it brought tears to my eyes to see wives and children greet their dear ones on the dock. It made me tremble at the thought of meeting you and what my emotions would be. But, Eileen, that moment is too wonderful to imagine as it draws nearer and nearer.

We are all in a beautiful camp here among the pines; it overlooks the sea and in the distance are very lovely snow-clad mountains. The air is so pure and invigorating after so many weeks in the heat of the tropics. There is a lovely officers' Mess here and the accommodation is wonderful. Darling, it is like a home from home and the Canadians are treating us even better than the Americans – and that's saying something. Last night we had a cinema show in the Mess. I met a very charming Major last evening – he was wearing an Irish kilt with a Tara

Brooch on it and two harps on his lapels! He is in the Canadian Irish Regiment and hails from Toronto. He was in Dublin recently and said it is the best city in the world – he had a wonderful holiday there and intends going back again. So, darling, I have first-hand information about conditions there. By the way, my Irish-Canadian friend had a cool reception in Scotland when he paraded in his Irish kilt! He has a very good Irish friend in Norfolk called Dr. Devlin (from the North).

Darling, I have some bad news – I shall be here at least *one week*! Our next stop will be Halifax and maybe New York. There is talk of us travelling across the Atlantic in the "Queen Mary". I sent you a cable this morning. This is a busy day – medical examination, X-ray, clothing issue, and pay. I shall keep you informed of all developments. I am in good form and wallowing in the fresh air. I have a good friend in Pilot Officer Power from Kerry; we are both keen walkers.

God bless you, Eileen,

All my love,

Forever yours,

Frank.

Postscript

After several weeks of recuperation in Victoria, **Frank Murray** set sail from New York on the Queen Mary and arrived in Southampton on 18th November 1945. Eileen had been warned about the chaos at the docks and so was not there to greet him but the couple finally met two days later on the dockside at Larne where they kissed for the first time. They were married at St Brigid's Church, Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast on 4th February 1946 and set up home in "Beechwood" at 95 Cliftonville Road, Belfast; they had five children (Villana, Edmée, Josette, Paul and Carl). The framed testimonial from his fellow POWs was always displayed prominently in the dining room. Frank opened a doctor's surgery in the rooms above his father's shop at 155 Oldpark Road. The shop was later sold to a relative, Pat Murray, and eventually the practice moved further down the Oldpark Road. On the night of 28th March 1972, four days after the announcement of the suspension of the Stormont government, the surgery premises were destroyed by arson and Frank took early retirement in 1974. The story goes that the crowd responsible for the arson attack was led by a patient who was himself delivered by Frank. Frank and Eileen retired to their bungalow in Merrion Avenue, Newcastle, Co. Down adjacent to the golf course where Eileen could play the sport she loved and be near the home of her sister Josephine.

In June 1946 Frank was awarded the M.B.E. In the early 1970s his home on the Cliftonville Road, "Beechwood", was searched by an Army patrol gathering information. Frank was at work but Eileen asked the officer in charge to remove his hat while the search took place; he initially refused. Then Eileen took him over to the framed testimonial and asked him to read it; he did so, removed his hat, apologized for the inconvenience and promised that the soldiers would do their job as quickly as possible. They left soon afterwards after finding nothing. Frank hardly ever talked about his wartime experiences but a 1983 meeting with Keith Mitchell (see below), a fellow POW in Hokkaido, brought back some unpleasant memories. Following a heart valve replacement operation in the early 1990s, Frank was admitted to hospital in Downpatrick. The rows of beds in the hospital reminded Frank of the POW camps and being a prisoner again; this led to him having nightmares about his time in Japan. During one such episode he broke a glass pane in a door and injured his hand. He did return to Merrion Avenue but was never quite the same. On 25th September 1993, while Eileen was herself in hospital in Downpatrick, Frank died at home in the presence of three of his children. He was 80 years old. Given the detrimental effect of Frank's wartime experiences on his health in later life, Eileen was subsequently awarded a War Widow's pension. Following a letter from her son Carl to HRH Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, Eileen was invited to Clarence House to be presented formally with Frank's MBE. This meeting took place on 26th May 1995. In the following years Eileen's health deteriorated and she was admitted to several nursing homes in the Newcastle and Castlewellan area before she went to live with her daughter Edmée in Reading. Edmée cared for her for several years until Eileen died peacefully at home on 22nd September 2009 at the age of 96. Frank and Eileen are buried together in the village graveyard in Bryansford, Co. Down. Eileen had bought the graveyard plot as a birthday present for Frank.

On 30th November 1995 HM Queen Elizabeth attended choral vespers at Westminster Cathedral; she was the first British monarch to attend a Catholic service since the Reformation.

Dr **Maxwell (Max) Andler** Jr was a 1st Lieutenant in the US Army Air Corps stationed in the Philippines when the Pacific war broke out. Following his capture by the Japanese he survived the Bataan Death March and arrived in the Hokkaido camps in April 1944 where he was the senior American officer. He worked with Frank to look after the welfare of all the prisoners. Following his release and recuperation he returned to the Los Angeles County Hospital where he worked as a neurosurgeon. In 1946 he met a student nurse, Valeda Johnson, and they married in 1950. They lived in Beverly Hills and had three children. On the night of 5th June 1968 Max was one of the neurosurgeons who operated on Senator Robert Kennedy after he was shot at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles. A personal letter of thanks from Kennedy's widow, Ethel, still hangs on the wall of Max and Valeda's house. Max Andler died on 8th January 1996. His wartime letters to his mother, family and friends were collected by his widow Valeda and published under the title *Letters Home: A Reflection of a Man's Survival*. The Murray and Andler families still keep in contact.

Lt. Colonel **Shigeo Emoto** was High Commandant of the Hakodate group of POW camps between March 1944 and May 1945. Having studied English in Hong Kong before the war, he had an excellent command of the language. He was genuinely concerned about the welfare of the prisoners and took numerous steps to improve

the condition of the men in the camps; his efforts were greatly appreciated. Shigeo was probably responsible for saving the lives of hundreds of prisoners in the camps. His stated goal was to make the Hakodate group of camps the best in Japan. According to an article in Stars and Stripes (3rd January 1949) reporting on the war crimes trials, Shigeo was relieved of his command because of his "leniency" towards the prisoners; this followed an inspection of the camps in February 1945 by Lt. General Hiroshi Tamura. A biography of Shigeo has been prepared by Nigel Brown whose father, Dan Brown, was a POW in Hokkaido (see http://www.nigelbrown.me.uk/pow-emoto.htm). After the war Shigeo was held in custody for six months in Sugamo prison as a possible suspect in war crimes' trials but was released without charge, due largely to the written testimonies of many former prisoners. He died in 1966.

Capt. **Athelstan (Athel) Ethelwulf Long** CMG, CBE of the Royal Artillery was with the 7th Bengal Battery of the 22nd Mountain Artillery of the Indian Army and was a fellow POW of Frank's in Changi. Athel had expressed a wish to become a doctor and so in January 1943 Frank started giving him lectures on medicine and even acquired a copy of Gray's Anatomy as well as preparing him for patient examinations. Athel's mother was the prolific author Marjorie Bowen (real maiden name Gabrielle Margaret Campbell). In 1943 Athel was listed on the nominal roll of 'H' Force based in Kanu Camp working on the Burma-Thailand railway. He survived this experience but did not go on to become a doctor. After the war he married Zadie Krantz in London in 1946. He worked as a diplomat in India (1946), Burma (1947-1948) and Nigeria (1948); he was Colonial Secretary and Deputy Governor in Swaziland in the 1960s, as well as the last Administrator (1968-1971) and then the first Governor (1971-1972) of the Cayman Islands. Athel was awarded the MBE (1959), the CBE (1964) and the CMG (1968). He and Zadie ended up living in the Cayman Islands. Athel gave Frank and Eileen a wedding gift of a leather writing case and sent a telegram wishing the couple "Every possible best wishes for a very happy future".

Before he joined the Straits Settlements Volunteer Force in 1938, **David Marshall** had a distinguished career as a lawyer in Singapore, specialising in criminal law. He was a POW in Changi from February 1942 before being transported to Hokkaido where he was a fellow prisoner with Frank. Although he is not mentioned in Frank's writings, it was David who drafted the testimonial presented to Frank by his fellow prisoners on 6th September 1945. After the war David had a brief stay in Australia visiting his father and brothers before returning to Singapore to practice law. He entered politics and became Singapore's first Chief Minister for a period of 14 months (1955-1956) after which he returned to his previous career as a criminal lawyer. He met Jean Mary Gray in 1959 and they were married in 1961; they had four children. Between 1978 and 1993 David was Singapore's Ambassador to France, Portugal, Spain and Switzerland. Frank and Eileen visited David and Jean in Singapore in the 1970s. Following Frank's death Eileen met David and Jean again when she and her son Carl visited Singapore in December 1994. David was already quite ill at the time and died of lung cancer in 1995. The Murray and Marshall families still keep in contact.

Frank's relationship with his patient and exile, Fr. **Johannes Messner**, is first described in his diary/letter to Eileen of 23rd June 1941 and then again in his diary on 15th May 1945. Before fleeing Austria after the annexation by Germany in 1938, Johannes was a prominent theologian and adviser to the Austrian Chancellor, Englebert Dollfuss (1892-1934). He helped Dollfuss devise a new constitution based on Catholic principles, although it was thought to be a form of Austrian fascism, albeit more akin to Mussolini's Italy than Hitler's Germany. Following the assassination of Dollfuss by Nazi agents in 1934, Johannes wrote a book entitled "Dollfuss: An Austrian Patriot" (1935) and helped his successor Kurt Schuschnigg. The book was critical of Hitler and Johannes fled Austria via Switzerland following the Anschluss. He was associated with The Cardinal Newman Oratory in Edgbaston, Birmingham during his time in England and was a patient of Frank's. Although he resumed his teaching career as a Professor of Ethics and Social Science in the University of Vienna in 1949, he still spent considerable time at the Cardinal Newman Oratory in Birmingham, unbeknownst to Frank. It is clear from Frank's letters that Johannes's experiences had a profound influence on Frank's thinking and probably contributed to his decision to enlist. See: https://translate.google.com/translate?hl=en&sl=de&u=https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johannes_Messner&prev=search

Signalman Ronald **Keith Mitchell** of the Royal Corps of Signals was a fellow POW of Frank's in Changi and Hokkaido. Keith was a jeweler and before the war he had worked for Mappin and Webb Ltd. before ending up at A. E. Davis Ltd. in Piccadilly. He was called up in 1941 and he arrived in Singapore ten days before the Pacific war started. Frank and Keith first met on the Wales Maru transport ship taking the POWs to Japan and

Frank is described by Keith as "a most excellent doctor from Belfast who was to prove to be a tower of strength in the difficult years ahead". After the war Keith returned to England in November 1945 to resume his job at A. E. David Ltd. and was elected Vice-President of the Gemmological Association in 1984. Keith contacted Frank in the early 1980s in order to ask him to read a draft of his manuscript and the two men subsequently met up at Keith's home in Orpington in 1983. His subsequent book, "Forty-Two Months in Durance Vile: Prisoner of the Japanese" (Robert Hale, London, 1997) describes his experiences in captivity, giving a detailed account of everyday life in the camps as well as the eventful journey from Singapore to Japan. Frank is mentioned numerous times in the text and the book provides a revealing insight into Frank's character from the point of view of the men under his command. Keith died in 2006.
See: https://gem-a.com/images/Documents/JoG/Archive/1956-97/JoG1992_23_1.pdf

Lt. **Oswald Wynd** was a Scottish novelist who was also in the camps with Frank. The son of missionaries, Oswald was born in Tokyo in 1913 and after schooling in Japan he attended the University of Edinburgh before joining the Scots Guards when the war started; he subsequently received a commission in the Intelligence Corps, presumably due to his skills in Japanese. He had dual British-Japanese citizenship and frequently acted as interpreter to liaise with the Japanese on behalf of the prisoners; for these actions he was mentioned in despatches. His nickname was "Wyndo". Much to the disappointment of the men, he was transferred to a different camp in October 1944 before rejoining the men when the war ended. On his way home to Scotland after the war he completed his first novel, "The Black Fountains" (1947) and entered it in a contest organized by the publishers Doubleday. It won him the first prize of $20,000 and led to him adopting writing as a career. He wrote thrillers under the pen name Gavin Black but his most famous novel was "The Ginger Tree" (1977) subsequently made into a four-part TV series by the BBC and Japan's NHK that was broadcast in 1989. Oswald died in 1998.
See: https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/obituary-oswald-wynd-1169874.html
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oswald_Wynd



Eileen O'Kane and Frank Murray were married on 4th February, 1946 at St Brigid's Church, Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast. (Credit: William Kirker.)

Appendix A:
War Crimes

Summary of statement by Frank Murray for War Crimes trial undertaken by General HQ/Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers:

On the 11 January 1946 Major Francis Joseph MURRAY R.A.M.C. executed an affidavit, the original of which is on file with Criminal Registry Division. MURRAY stated in substance, that he was captured by the Japanese at Singapore 15 February 1942, and was in Changi Prison until May 1943, at which time he was taken to Hakodate P.O.W. Camp #1 located at Muroran. Murray stated that from 1943 until February 1944 Major R.R. STEWART was the senior British officer of the camp, and that after that time he (MURRAY) was the senior British officer, until June 1945. MURRAY stated that on 18 December 1943, Pvt. SUTTLE was sentenced to 10 days in the guard house for stealing a piece of fish and that SUTTLE was put in the guard house without any blankets or medical attention though the time was mid-winter. MURRAY stated that on the 23rd December SUTTLE was removed from the guard house in extremis – his feet were gangrenous and that SUTTLE literally froze to death and died one hour after entering the hospital. MURRAY stated that Sapper GLOVER died of acute Osteomyelitis owing to the refusal of the Japanese authorities to permit his being taken to the fully equipped Japanese hospital nearby or to supply MURRAY with the instruments. Murray stated that the camp commander and Sgt. Major ARAKI were responsible for GLOVER's death. MURRAY stated that there were beatings daily at the camp and that S/M ARAKI often beat sick men and sent them out to work. MURRAY stated that the Q.M. Sgt. (name unknown, but identified by P/Sgt. CAMPBELL as ASARI) made a point of beating someone every day, usually with his fist, and that on one occasion the Q.M. Sgt. split a man's head open with a sword scabbard. MURRAY stated that the camp guards were particularly brutal and that in spite of protests to the Camp Commander were never restrained. MURRAY stated that WATANABE was a particularly brutal guard and on one occasion lined 30 men up in a barrack's room and knocked each man down with his fist. MURRAY stated that food was bad and entirely insufficient but that after the cessation of hostilities the Japanese produced every kind of food imaginable, butter, eggs, milk, meat, etc., which proved that they had the food available and that they could have provided better food had they wished. MURRAY stated that Dr. SHIBA a Japanese Military Doctor lined all sick men of the camp up in the snow and kept them on parade for two hours and beat every one across the face, and that Dr. SHIBA said that there were too many sick men in the camp and did this to discourage sickness. MURRAY stated that on 5 June 1945 Hakodate Camp #1 moved to Nishi Ashibetsu, and that at the new camp there were no special atrocities but that the general conduct of the camp officials was bad. MURRAY stated that there was no water supply and that they had to rely on a stream outside the camp for water for 500 men quite inadequate. MURRAY stated that at this camp the food became really bad and that everyone grew thin but that fortunately they lost no one through starvation. MURRAY stated that as punishment the guards would stand a man outside the guard room for periods of 24 to 48 hours without food and that the prisoner would usually collapse after the end of 24 hours at which time they would be carried in to the guard room. MURRAY stated that authorities refused to allow any communication pass through to the Red Cross, so therefore no copies of any reports are available. MURRAY stated that H.F. PERRINS, W.P. BYRNE and W. COLLIER could give evidence of the facts which he had stated.

As a result of this and affadavits from other prisoners, the following were convicted after trials:

Kuniichi ARAKI; original verdict: Hanged by the neck until dead (subsequently commuted to 20 years hard labour)

Eiji ASARI; original verdict: 25 years confinement at hard labour

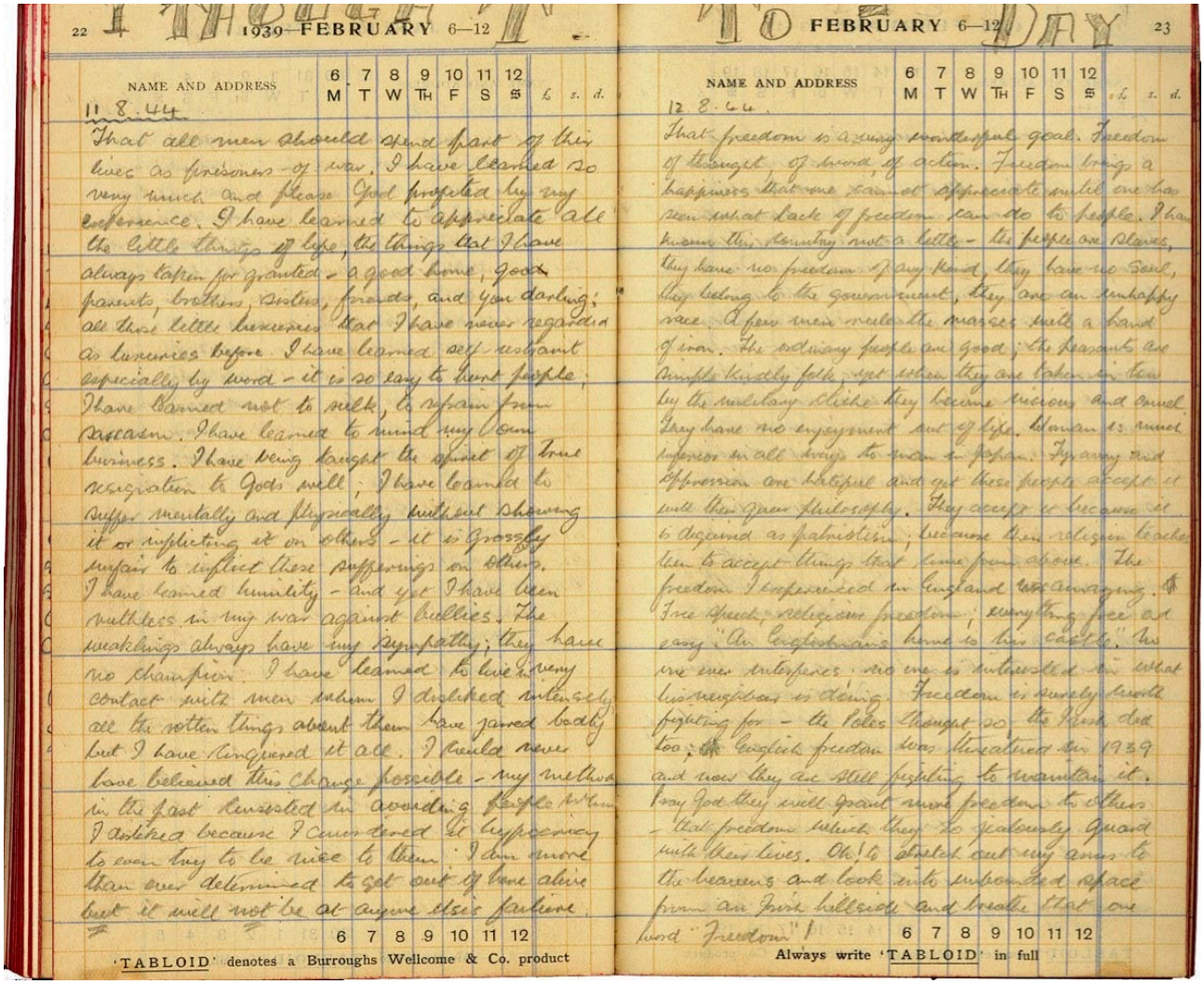
Kaichi HIRATE; original verdict: Death by hanging

Tsutomi SHIBA; original verdict: 5 years confinement at hard labour

Sadao WATANABE; original verdict: 30 years confinement at hard labour

See: https://www.ocf.berkeley.edu/~changmin/Japan/Yokohama/Reviews/Yokohama_Reviews.htm

Appendix B:
"I Thought Today ... "



22 I THOUGHT TODAY 1939—FEBRUARY 6—12

NAME AND ADDRESS | 6 M | 7 T | 8 W | 9 TH | 10 F | 11 S | 12 S | £ s. d.

11.8.44

That all men should spend part of their lives as prisoners of war. I have learned so very much and please God profited by my experience. I have learned to appreciate all the little things of life, the things that I have always taken for granted – a good home, good parents, brothers, sisters, friends, and you darling; all these little luxuries that I have never regarded as luxuries before. I have learned self restraint especially by word – it is so easy to hurt people; I have learned not to sulk, to refrain from sarcasm. I have learned to mind my own business. I have been taught the spirit of true resignation to God's will; I have learned to suffer mentally and physically without showing it or inflicting it on others – it is grossly unfair to inflict these sufferings on others. I have learned humility – and yet I have been ruthless in my war against bullies. The weaklings always have my sympathy; they have no champion. I have learned to live in very close contact with men whom I disliked intensely; all the rotten things about them have jarred badly but I have conquered it all. I could never have believed this change possible – my method in the past consisted in avoiding people whom I disliked because I considered it hypocrisy to even try to be nice to them. I am more than ever determined to get out of here alive but it will not be at anyone else's failure.

6 7 8 9 10 11 12

'TABLOID' denotes a Burroughs Wellcome & Co. product

TODAY FEBRUARY 6—12 23

NAME AND ADDRESS | 6 M | 7 T | 8 W | 9 TH | 10 F | 11 S | 12 S | £ s. d.

12.8.44

That freedom is a very wonderful goal. Freedom of thought, of word, of action. Freedom brings a happiness that one cannot appreciate until one has seen what lack of freedom can do to people. I have known this country not a little – its people are slaves, they have no freedom of any kind, they have no soul, they belong to the government, they are an unhappy race. A few men rule the masses with a hand of iron. The ordinary people are good; the peasants are simple kindly folk; but when they are taken in hand by the military clique they become vicious and cruel. They have no enjoyment out of life. Woman is much inferior in all ways to woman in general. Tyranny and oppression are unique and yet these people accept it with their own philosophy. They accept it because it is ingrained as patriotism; because their religion teaches them to accept things that come from above. The freedom I experienced in England was amazing. Free speech, religious freedom; everything free and easy. "An Englishman's home is his castle." No one ever interferes – no one is interested in what his neighbour is doing. Freedom is surely worth fighting for – the Poles thought so, the Finns did too; the English freedom was threatened in 1939 and now they are still fighting to maintain it. I pray God they will grant more freedom to others – that freedom which they so jealously guard with their lives. Oh! to stretch out my arms to the heavens and look into unbounded space from an open hillside and breathe that one word "Freedom"!

6 7 8 9 10 11 12

Always write 'TABLOID' in full

12.8.44

That freedom is a very wonderful goal. Freedom of thought, of word, of action. Freedom brings a happiness that one cannot appreciate until one has seen what lack of freedom can do to people. I have known this country not a little – the people are slaves, they have *no* freedom of any kind, they have no soul, they belong to the government, they are an unhappy race. A few men rule the masses with a hand of iron. The ordinary people are good; the peasants are simple, kindly folk, yet when they are taken in tow by the military clique they become vicious and cruel. They have no enjoyment out of life. Woman is much inferior in all ways to man in Japan. Tyranny and oppression are hateful and yet these people accept it with their queer philosophy. They accept it because it is disguised as patriotism; because their religion teaches them to accept things that come from above. The freedom I experienced in England was amazing. Free speech; religious freedom; everything free and easy. "An Englishman's home is his castle." No one ever interferes. No one is interested in what his neighbour is doing. Freedom is surely worth fighting for – the Poles thought so; the Irish did too; English freedom was threatened in 1939 and now they are still fighting to maintain it. Pray God they will grant more freedom to others – that freedom which they so generously guard with their lives. Oh! to stretch out my arms to the heavens and look into unbounded space from an Irish hillside and breathe that one word, "Freedom"!

13.8.44

About that divine passion called Love. Many people do not believe that love exists at all; they think that it is an exaggerated liking plus a lot of imagination. Love must exist. True love is not mere sex; not mere beauty love; not just companionship. Beauty is always present whether beauty of form or beauty of mind and character. Companionship is necessary too because the object of love is marriage and procreation – two people have to live together for the rest of their lives. The sexual side of love is essential because it is the fulfillment of love. It must be gentle and not savage; it must be loving and kind and understanding. These must be natural when true love is present.

When two people love they will do anything for one another; no sacrifice is considered too much to make. Nobody is perfect and temperaments will clash at times but God gives us the grace to overlook these things in the sacrament of marriage. He gives us self-restraint and patience. The troubles of one partner are gladly shared by the other and so they are more easily borne than alone.

One does strange, mad things when one is in love and yet one is barely conscious of anything unusual in one's conduct. People have said that love is a form of madness – maybe it is but it is a very sweet form of madness. Free love could never be a success – society would crumble and so would the state. The foundations of the society and the state are the family and the home. When these cease to mean anything then the former will crash. God in his wisdom and the Church by His holy guidance has laid down certain commandments and precepts which keep marriage, love, and the home sacred things – not just the playthings of man to be treated lightly. Divorce too is the curse of modern society – men tear asunder whom God has joined together in holy matrimony. Homes are broken up under the slightest pretext. What a horrible fate for the children of such wedlock! What is to become of them.

My idea of perfect happiness is two people – an Irish Catholic man and woman – deeply and truly in love and living together in perfect harmony – and living up to their religion. There is no home on earth to compare with that home; there is no happiness like their happiness.

Love should not interfere with one's occupation in life. Love

October 1944

What civilisation and Christianity has done for our womanhood. Woman has been raised aloft to a position equal to that of a man. The old idea of woman's inferiority is now a thing of the past. Do women nowadays really appreciate this fact? Many of them want to go farther. They want to replace man as the breadwinner; they want to be independent of him. This has bred that awful abomination of the masculine type of woman who struts around in trousers, smokes, drinks, and in general apes man's humanly(?) traits. They have lost all that feminine charm and simplicity which endears them to man. Every man wants to make some particular woman the queen of his home, the mother of his children, a companion for life whom he can love and cherish. He wants his wife to behave as a woman and his lover and as a mother. How sad it is to see a so called modern mother who rarely even sees her children but leaves their rearing(?) and upbringing to a nurse. It is not

fashionable for the mother to have many children or to look after them. It is undignified to be seen walking out with her child in a perambulator.

I know that my wife will over her home and her children; that she will never be ashamed of that home or those children. I will not expect her to spend her entire life in our home looking after me and our children. That is unreasonable. She will never be a drudge or slave if I can prevent it. There is a happy medium between a wife who spends all of her time at home and one who is never at home.

If only women in Christian countries would fully appreciate this emancipation which Christ has bestowed upon them. They would love their homes better and be better wives if they did; nor would they want to imitate man in his daily life. Oh if they could only see the women coolies that I have seen – in India, Malaya, and Japan. It is revolting to see them do the work of a navvy. A few yards from where I sit writing there are hundreds of women working on huge piles of pig iron – very heavy work for a man even. And strapped to their backs are tiny infants being jostled around in an unhuman way.

In this country people never marry for love and yet their system seems to work alright. But they are an unhappy people. The women make ideal wives *because* they consider man to be a very superior being and so they just slave for him from morning till night. They will suffer any kind of indignity at the hands of their husbands. They expect their husbands to be unfaithful to them when they are parted – a wife will even supply the money so that her husband can be unfaithful while away from her; but she is the most faithful woman on earth! These people state that the secret of the country's great success in the field of battle is because the soldiers have no ties with home or wives. They are discouraged from writing home. Maybe they have got something there.

An Englishman going off to the war leaves his comfortable home, a loving wife and children whom he adores. It is only human that he should want to return to those he loves; may be he will do anything to keep alive and forget the crusade upon which he is engaged – to fight and die, if necessary, for his country. He is more likely to take the easy way out if he is ever thinking of his home and his family. On the other hand he may realise he is fighting for his country, for its honour, for his own honour, and for his home. Surely this is the warrior "par excellence". A Japanese soldier goes out to fight and die for his Emperor because the high one has ordered it. They are taught to consider death very wonderful, because after death they will be worshipped as gods!

May be an Irishman fighting for his country is the ideal to be aimed at where women are concerned. He leaves his wife and his home; he has a passionate love for his country and for freedom. He will go ou and fight to the death for his wife, his home, and his country; he will think death a hard thing but he knows his duty and it is a sweet consolation His wife loves him, but she will rejoice that he has done his duty to her and to his country. She considers it a great honour to have a dear husband who has died for his country.

The Catholic ideal of womanhood is the only one which leads to an ordered social state. Woman has equal rights with man in the eyes of the Church. But in a home the husband is the head of the house. This does not mean that the husband is a tyrant and the wife is his slave. No! they share and share alike in everything and decide most things concerning their home and family on an equal and mutual footing. But every unit of the social order *must* have a head and the head is the husband the breadwinner.

A woman's place is in the home and until the world at large returns to this old-fashioned idea the sooner will there be more real happiness in the world.

A woman can have feminine charm and be a home lover; but oh what an ornament she can become and a hopelessly impractical wife. Still some men prefer the "doll" type. Well good luck to them. Woman is a creature to be adored and loved by the opposite sex but she must have a practical side or else her home will be chaotic.

All white women should pay a visit to the East – to see the lordly Indian husband preceding his wife along the road, she heavily laden and he, carrying 'nere a thing!; to see the slaves women are in Malaya and Japan. What a rude awakening it would be and what better wives they would make when they return home again and settle down.

A woman's place is in the home.

Reason is reasonable. God is reasonable. Good reasoning requires for its basis true first principles.

Appendix C:
Transcript of Interview with Dr Max Andler

The following is a transcript of a conversation recorded on 20th July 1995 between Dr Maxwell Andler (MA) and Carl Murray (CM). The interview took place in Dr Andler's home in Beverly Hills, California.

CM: Do you want to say anything or shall I ask?

MA: Let me say a couple of words.

CM: OK.

MA: This is just for tape you are making this?

CM: Yeah. Well, I want to transcribe it as well.

MA: Let me say a few things and then you can ask me whatever questions you think are appropriate? OK?

CM: OK.

MA: Ready to go?

CM: Yeah.

MA: Well, we are very pleased to have Carl visit us again on one of his periodic trips to the States. We enjoy seeing him, hearing of his exploits and reminiscing about my experiences with his Dad. We are going back 50 years and it is very difficult to recall details of my many experiences. I do recall on my arrival in the Hakodate Camp first meeting Frank and recalling a large, straight-backed military man wearing his cap, looking rather dour and having very little to say. He seemed pleased to have me there to balance the three Dutch officers who drove him crazy. Even though there were Dutch troops as well as British, Frank was the officer in charge as far as the Japanese were concerned and he wore the mantle without any difficulty or problems. I think he appreciated most my taking over the mess officer's responsibility when I arrived. The biggest problem was the arguments between the British and the Dutch groups as to whom was being cheated out of the amount of rice that they had. My job was to have a stick to measure the amount of rice in each box for each barracks. I didn't eliminate the problems, but it was much, much better than before.

My overall impression of Frank was that he was both ...

Frank served as a medical officer but there was little medicine to do and his primary job was to protect his troops from the work assignments of the Japanese rather than go to work when he thought they were not well. This caused a constant turmoil. His main responsibility as far as he was concerned was to take care of the British troops.

Frank was finally transferred from the camp and command of the British troops in late 1944 because he refused to go along with some experiments that the Japanese lieutenant medical officer tried to carry out and he left me in charge of all British personnel, which to me was a great tribute. The troops were loyal to him without any restrictions and when he left they transferred their loyalty to me. It was an unforgettable experience.

However, our paths did not cross again until approximately 10 years after the war when Eileen and Frank were able to visit with us and stay at our home in Beverly Hills. For about a week they had a lovely time and we renewed our previous friendships and enjoyed every minute of it. About 10 years later he was able to come again and again we had a wonderful, wonderful reunion. Eileen was able to play golf and Frank and I just sat and talked and talked.

As of now, I must say that my present memories of Frank are that he was a fine man of principle, meticulous, he took his assignments to heart and he was all that one could expect of an officer.

OK, now you can add anything you like, any questions and see if I can answer them.

CM: Did you work in the hospital? Was there a hospital? What was the hospital like?

MA: Well, we didn't have a hospital. We had a barracks we used to call a hospital and it was really just trying to keep the men there in bed who we thought were unfit to go to work in the mines; diarrhea and this and that or just didn't want to work. He would try to find any excuse he could find at sick call to justify putting them on these sick lists but there really wasn't any real hospital care. We had no medication for over a year until the antibiotics and things came from the Red Cross. We put a patient in the hospital one time for, I don't recall what, and it was at that time coming back from the hospital that we were in a jeep, it overturned and Frank cut his scalp, sort of stunned and very concerned that he had lost his cap and retrieved it. But other than that, our medical value was relatively minimal.

CM: Was it true that the Japanese used to take the ... confiscate the medicine as punishment on occasions?

MA: Not really, not really. What happened was we would get medicine from the International Red Cross. More important than the medicine was the Red Cross boxes from the United States and I felt that because they were American contributions — clothing, food, I would take charge of them and ration them out. For the most part the Japanese didn't disturb these. Our biggest problem was with the Dutch captain who felt that it was international and therefore I had nothing to say about it. But Frank and I managed to overcome that, kept track of all the things that would come and weighed. We would get a package and just live high off the hog with these Red Cross boxes. Each man would get the can of spam and a pound of chocolate and cigarettes and this and that in it and then they would be gone again and we would be without really anything until another batch came along. And the medicines — we didn't really get much use for the medicines. Medicines for pain and very few antibiotics that we really needed; patients with gastro-intestinal problems and vitamins for most of the men who had beriberi. But our job as doctors was really just of very little concern other than the weight of our being doctors.

CM: Did the Japanese ever force people that were considered sick to work?

MA: Oh, many times, many times. They would pull the list and they would insist on whether Frank and I say no, then put them on the gurney or whatever it was and just take them to work. Not all the time. But they were in control. They thought there were too many on sick call. And of course the men were looking for every opportunity to get out of work, so it was extremely difficult to maintain a balance. But considering everything, he did extremely well in controlling the men who were ill from the Japanese. And for the most part the Japanese were really not very hard on the prisoners. I don't know what happened in the mines, but they weren't just going round beating up on people all the time. They had a little sake and get unhappy and knock somebody around, but they weren't killing people, they weren't breaking their limbs and things like that. The prison guards were really third rate soldiers who

had been retired for whatever purpose— from wounds, or disability or something. So for the most part they were just surviving. Occasionally one or two of them would get a little nasty.

CM: Did the British and the Americans get on well together?

MA: We only had my corps-men. I had about six corps-men that came with me from the Philippines. They didn't have much to do. They had them working actually and for the most part they got along fairly well. The biggest problem in the camp was food, or lack of food, and that was the most important thing in the world. They would come in at seven in the morning to the mess tent where we were cooking up big, big urns of rice and they had wooden boxes that were about sixteen inches deep and maybe two and a half feet long and twelve inches wide with handles. They would fill these with rice and measure them with a stick and then they would go back to forty men and so on and give this out. And that was the most important thing of the day as far as the men were concerned. They were getting something to eat.

CM: So, were you always in the same camp when you were in Hokkaido?

MA: No, no. We were moved from Hakodate to ... actually up to Nisi Asibetsu up in the mountains where the men were doing something else up there.

CM: What was the reason for the move? Was it just labour?

MA: It was some labour. They wanted labour there. I don't know but I think Frank moved with us then and then was sent away shortly after that.

CM: So did he come back to the camp?

MA: He never came back, no.

CM: Even after liberation?

MA: No. After liberation we were in the camp almost a month. We were up in the mountains and we were told to put out signs "POW", white signs on the ground. And then some Air Force ... some Navy-based aeroplanes flew over and parachuted us food, and magazines and cigarettes, and stuff. And then later on some B-29's came over with big platforms with fifty-five gallon drums filled with food and they would drop those. And occasionally they would be too heavy and break loose and come down just like a bomb, one of these fifty-five gallon drums, go right through the barracks — a two-storey barracks, killed two men in one of the barracks, before we were liberated. And then that was September 12, a plane came back over and dropped a walkie-talkie to the commanding officer. He said that Australian troops were coming in to liberate us and to give this to the next in command, to the non-British, American troops. These Australians came in, ... and took us out to Sapporo where we spent a couple of days and then were flown back to Okinawa. And that's where we separated; there the British troops were taken by their people and I was sent to the American troops and that was that.

CM: Did you have any idea when you were in the camp how the war was going?

MA: Yeah, we got some ideas. There was a ... one of the Dutch , Van Drigs, a junior lieutenant, was able to rig up a short-wave, taking the plastic barrel from a shaving kit that the thing came in, and wrapping some wires around

this and making a short-wave radio. And every so often they would get a message that would say what was going on. And in addition, towards the end of the war, you would see a Japanese newspaper, and you would see (Japanese) — B29 — that was telling you about the bombings down in southern Japan. I don't know whether Wyndo, ... Oswald was able to read the Japanese or not, maybe he was, but apparently they were taking a terrible beating so we knew things were getting worse for the Japanese up until about August 12th, I guess. And then there seemed to be much less activity from the Japanese; they were up on a hill from us. You could see them up there. And they didn't take any men into the camp to work. Then on August 15th, we saw them all standing around the radio, their heads bowed. Apparently it was a message from the emperor that the war was over. And after that they just didn't say a word to us, they just left the camp and (we) never saw them again. But before that, a couple of days before that, even though they didn't take the men out, they wanted the men, the soldiers who were waiting on them and carrying their water up the hill, to come and do it still and they refused. Why they refused I am not sure, but I guess we felt the war was over and they never did anything about it. But they just disappeared like that.

CM: When you were being shipped back, did you ever write anything down about the war?

MA: No. I set out with a letter to home. I used to write a lot. They had the Chinese Clipper, what was it, the Pacific something? And they had this air mail going back and forth. And I started out a letter to my mother telling her what was going on as best I could. And the war began and I kept adding to this. I found an old typewriter in various places and found some paper like this actually, engineer's paper. I started typing things about what was happening to me, you know, where we were moving, the bombing, Nichols Field and the Japanese came round to inspect camps so I buried it and then they transferred us and I never got back to that camp. So I started over again and write about 4, 6 months and then the same thing happened. I think it happened about 3 times and then I kept this all through the Philippines and I guess I kept it in Japan too, right up to the time we were going to be liberated. Then I had a problem with Boeske. Boeske was a captain, a Dutchman who really didn't like Frank, didn't like me, didn't like the Americans and was at constant odds with us. And then after I got home I tried to put together ... I had a friend, a student, who typed this up. Actually I had bits and pieces and I had about a 100 pages, about a 100,000 words, more than 100 pages, and I would just read it and it was very personal and I have never really done anything with it. One of these days we will. Maybe this August.

CM: Do you think there was a secret to your survival? Why did you survive?

MA: No idea. I was very lucky. Being a medical officer certainly helped. I was lucky when the ship we were in had no trouble getting to Japan. And I was sent far enough away, in Hokkaido, really out of the thick of things and other than that I have no idea why I survived all that. It was just the luck of the Irish!

CM: Do you think you learned anything positive from your experiences? Was there any positive aspect to your experiences?

MA: Oh, I think so. I think that you have to have a broader perspective on things that happen, bad and good, and try to, even though you don't consciously do it ... as a result of that subsequent things happened that I was able to take care of them better. I never really had any emotional problems from it. I probably learned how to get along with people. I became very active when I came back to California; very active professionally and politically; in the hospital as Chief of Staff, two years I guess, and worked for various communities, welfare and so on. So I think it probably broadened me a great deal; a much better perspective of things; a better appreciation of things. There are some things you never, never forget. I can't forget sitting around in the cold at night; Frank and Wynd and the guys around a little charcoal boiler trying to keep warm. Taking your breath to bed with you. For months, you

know. You don't realise how you survive you know; day in and day out; existence; just remarkable. But we did. Frank did. And I think it probably did him equally good.

CM: What's your attitude towards the Japanese?

MA: My attitude to the Japanese has never been bad. We felt that the Japanese people were suffering almost as much as we were. We were out picking mulberry leaves to make soup; they were out picking mulberry leaves. It was the military who were the bastards, who just whipped the country into a frenzy. I have always had a high respect for American-Japanese. They are hard-working, good family people. Well educated, religious. They take responsibilities very seriously. And you can only respect them. And the Japanese people survived a terrible, terrible thing. So I really have ... I don't even really think about any animosity; it is the military that I think about, specifically I get upset, but in general it doesn't bother me. We had a lovely, lovely visit in Japan, in Tokyo, in Kyoto and enjoyed a lot of places ... later.

CM: Is there anything else you want to say?

MA: Not really. It is good to, kind of, think about those things.

CM: Thank you very much.

MA: I think, for you, the one thing that I recall is seeing your father standing up straight, and rather stern, and rigid and just insisting that this is right.

CM: OK. Thanks very much.

Appendix D:
Testimonial

On 6th September 1945, a few days after his return to Raijo camp (known to the prisoners as Nisi Asibetsu) the prisoners presented Frank with a beautifully written testimonial. Here is a transcript of that document:

Major F. J. Murray
Royal Army Medical Corps

Dear Major Murray,

In this moment of our release from the purgatory of Japanese incarceration, we feel your absence and wish you were here to share our happiness as you shared our want and humiliation till seven weeks ago, when you were removed from this camp.

The great majority of us have known you for over three years – since the "Mucky" Maru of May 1943. You were our only Medical Officer at the Prisoner of War Camps at Hakodate, at Yakumo and during the worst period at Muroran. Since early last year you have been Officer Commanding British and American Prisoners of War and Senior Medical Officer at Muroran and here. During these two years – the blackest period of our lives – you were at all times and in all places a genuine friend to each and all of us.

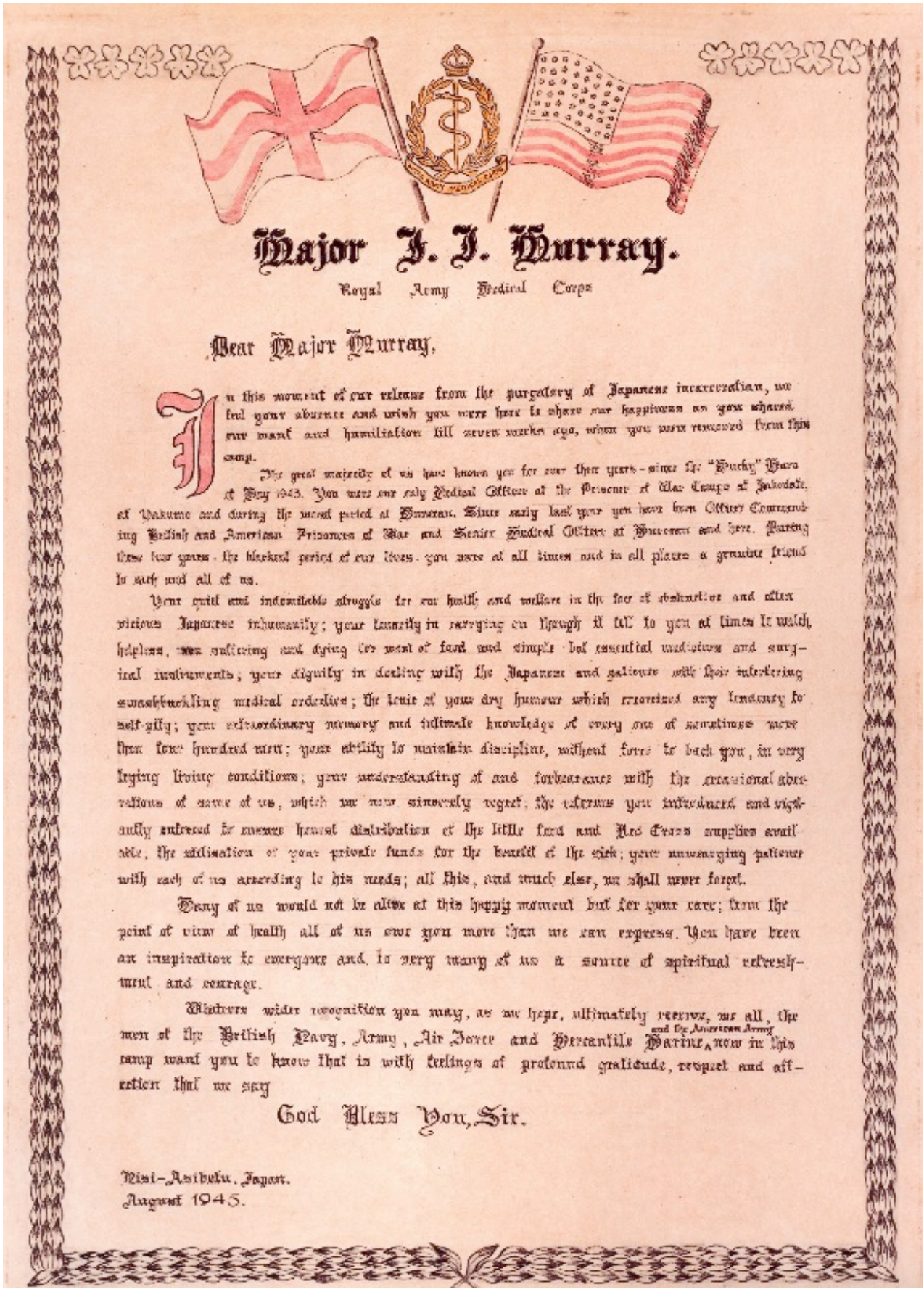
Your quiet and indomitable struggle for our health and welfare in the face of obstructive and often vicious Japanese inhumanity; your tenacity in carrying on though it fell to you at times to watch, helpless, men suffering and dying for want of food and simple but essential medicines and surgical instruments; your dignity in dealing with the Japanese and patience with their interfering swashbuckling medical orderlies; the tonic of your dry humour which exorcised any tendency for self-pity; your extraordinary memory and intimate knowledge of every one of sometimes more than four hundred men; your ability to maintain discipline, without force to back you, in very trying living conditions; your understanding of and forebearance with the occasional aberrations of some of us, which we now sincerely regret; the reforms you introduced and vigilantly enforced to ensure honest distribution of the little food and Red Cross supplies available; the utilization of your private funds for the benefit of the sick; your unwavering patience with each of us according to his needs; all this, and much else, we shall never forget.

Many of us would not be alive at this happy moment but for your care; from the point of view of health all of us owe you more than we can express. You have been an inspiration to everyone and to very many of us a source of spiritual refreshment and courage.

Whatever wider recognition you may, as we hope, ultimately receive, we all, the men of the British Navy, Army, Air Force and Mercantile Marine and the American Army now in this camp want you to know that [it] is with feelings of profound gratitude, affection and respect that we say

God Bless You, Sir.

Nisi-Asibetu. Japan.
August 1945.



Major J. J. Murray.

Royal Army Medical Corps

Dear Major Murray,

In this moment of our release from the purgatory of Japanese incarceration, we feel your absence and wish you were here to share our happiness as you shared our want and humiliation till seven weeks ago, when you were removed from this camp.

The great majority of us have known you for over three years - since the "Sticky" Wars at Bicy 1943. You were our only Medical Officer at the Prisoner of War Camps at Inhodale, at Yokume and during the worst period at Omuta. Since early last year you have been Officer Commanding British and American Prisoners of War and Senior Medical Officer at Omuta and here. During these four years - the blackest period of our lives - you were at all times and in all places a genuine friend to each and all of us.

Your quiet and indomitable struggle for our health and welfare in the face of obstruction and often vicious Japanese inhumanity; your tenacity in carrying on through ill luck to get at times to watch, helpless, men suffering and dying for want of food and simple but essential medicines and surgical instruments; your dignity in dealing with the Japanese and guiding with their interfering swashbuckling medical orderlies; the tonic of your dry humour which remained any tendency to self-pity; your extraordinary memory and intimate knowledge of every one of sometimes more than four hundred men; your ability to maintain discipline, without force to back you, in very trying living conditions; your understanding of and forbearance with the occasional aberrations of some of us, which we now sincerely regret; the reforms you introduced and rightly enforced to ensure honest distribution of the little food and Red Cross supplies available, the utilisation of your private funds for the benefit of the sick; your unwavering patience with each of us according to his needs; all this, and much else, we shall never forget.

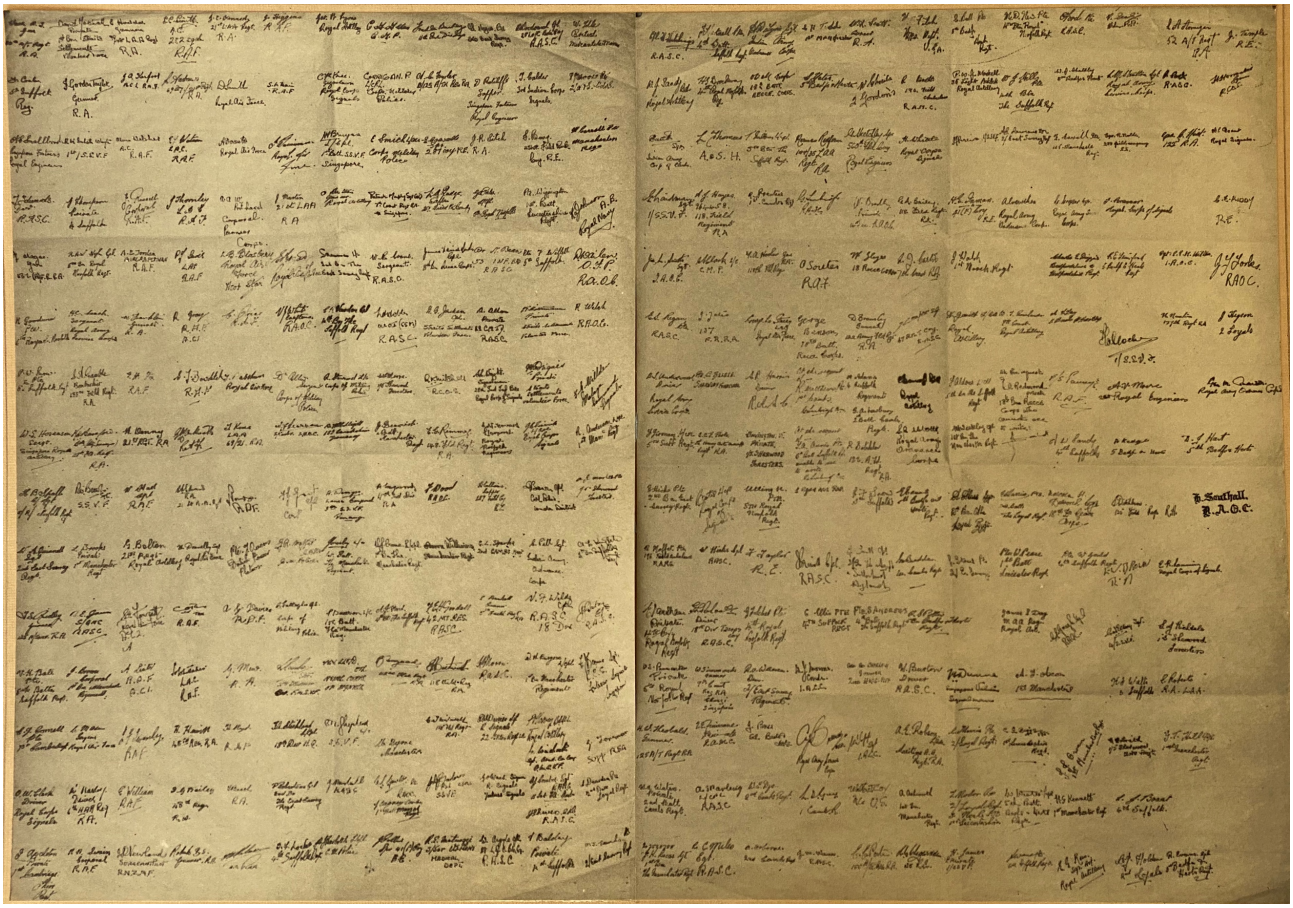
Many of us would not be alive at this happy moment but for your care; from the point of view of health all of us owe you more than we can express. You have been an inspiration to everyone and, to very many of us a source of spiritual refreshment and courage.

Whatever wider recognition you may, as we hope, ultimately receive, we all, the men of the British Navy, Army, Air Force and Mercantile Marine and the American Army now in this camp want you to know that in with feelings of profound gratitude, respect and affection that we say

God Bless You, Sir.

Nisi-Ashebu, Japan.
August 1945.

A photograph of the testimonial presented to Frank Murray by his fellow prisoners 6th September 1945. The text was drafted by David Marshall and the design was by Harry Southall, fellow POWs in the camp.



Signatures of 348 POWs who presented Frank with the testimonial.

Appendix E:
Timeline

1912, 4th December: Francis (Frank) Joseph Murray is born in a room above his father's shop at 155 Oldpark Road, Belfast.

1929, summer: Frank meets Eileen at a dance in Ranafast, Donegal.

1937, 9th July: Frank graduates from Queen's University, Belfast.

1937, 13th October: Frank starts work at Dr Maurice Macsherry's surgery in Birmingham.

1939, 2nd December: Frank leaves Birmingham and travels to Crookham Camp to join R.A.M.C. as Lieutenant.

1940, 9th January: Frank leaves England bound for India.

1940, (approx.) 2nd February: Frank arrives in Rawalpindi to work in the Military Hospital.

1940, 20th April: Frank starts work as Medical Officer to a Battery of Royal Artillery based in Murree hill station.

1940, 20th October: Frank returns to Rawalpindi.

1940, 29th December: Eileen sends first letter to Frank.

1941, 15th February: Frank appointed 2nd in Command of Indian Army's 27th Field Ambulance and promoted to the rank of Acting Major.

1941, 26th February: Eileen's first letter reaches Frank.

1941, 5th April: Frank leaves Rawalpindi by train.

1941, 16th April: Frank leaves Hyderabad.

1941, 17th April: Frank arrives in Madras.

1941, 20th April: Frank arrives in Penang, Malaya.

1941, 21st April: Frank arrives in Ipoh, Malaya.

1941, 3rd May: Frank attends a garden party hosted by the Sultan of Perak.

1941, 7th May: Frank receives a cable from Eileen signed "Love Eileen".

1941, approx. 6th June: Frank arrives in Keroh (or Kroh) in the north of Perak, Malaya, near the border with Thailand.

1941, 5th July: Frank receives a cable from Eileen; she agrees to marry him.

1941, 25th July: Frank receives first letter from Eileen following their engagement.

1941, 4th August: Frank arrives at camp near Kuantan, Malaya.

1941, 8th December: The Japanese invade at Kota Bharu in northern Malaya near the border with Thailand. Frank treats one of the first casualties.

1942, 16th January: Frank is appointed Commanding Officer of an Indian Army Motor Ambulance Convoy.

1942, 18th January: Frank arrives in Singapore.

1942, 15th February: Singapore surrenders to the Japanese and Frank is officially a POW. On this day he starts writing a diary in the form of a long letter to Eileen.

1942, 21st February: Frank arrives in Changi POW camp.

1942, 12th November: In Changi Frank starts writing up a journal of his wartime experiences.

1943, 16th May: Frank leaves Singapore on the Wales Maru bound for Japan.

1943, 7th June: Frank and the prisoners disembark at Moji, Japan.

1943, 10th June: Frank arrives in Hakodate Camp, Hokkaido.

1943, 16th June: Frank arrives in Yakumo Camp, Hokkaido.

1943, 25th October: Frank arrives at Muroran Camp, Hokkaido.

1944, 21st February: Frank is the Officer Commanding the troops in the camp when more senior officers leave.

1945, 5th June: Frank arrives at Raijo Camp, near Nisi Ashibetsu, Hokkaido.

1945, 26th June: Frank arrives at Utashinai Camp, Hokkaido

1945, 7th July: Frank arrives at Akabira Camp, Hokkaido

1945, 2nd September: Frank returns to Raijo Camp, near Nisi Ashibetsu, Hokkaido

1945, 13th September: Frank flies from Sapporo to Yokohama.

1945, 14th September: Frank flies from Yokohama to Okinawa.

1945, 16th September: Typhoon hits Okinawa.

1945, 19th September: Frank flies from Okinawa to Manila.

1945, 20th September: Frank sees Gracie Fields give a concert at the Manila camp.

1945, 18th November: Frank arrives in Southampton aboard the Queen Mary.

1946, 4th February: Frank and Eileen are married in Belfast.

1993, 25th September: Frank dies at home in Newcastle, Co. Down.

2009, 22nd September: Eileen dies at home in Reading, England.

Appendix F:
Additional Publications

Andler, M. M. (2005). “Letters Home: A Reflection of a Man’s Survival”, Edited by Valeda Andler. (The Center Press, Thousand Oaks).

Mitchell, R. K. (1997). “Forty-two Months In Durance Vile: Prisoner of the Japanese” (Robert Hale, London).

Shores, C. & Cull, B. with Izawa, T. “Bloody Shambles: The First Comprehensive Account of Air Operations Over South-East Asia, December 1941–April 1942”. (Grub Street, London).