



27th Field Ambulance,  
Malaya,  
18th May.

My dearest Eileen,

I had another cable from you this morning - it was waiting for me when I came back from Mass. Thank you, my darling, for making me happy today; I was worried about you in case something had happened at home. It was quite a miracle, that cable ever reaching me at all because the only inscription on it was "67th Field Ambulance" - no name! So you may guess that many people read it before I did! The postal people do get mixed up nowadays and continually send wrong messages over the wires. Anyhow your cable reached me and that's all that matters. Well, Eileen O'Kane, how dare you ask me to write often to you! I have written you six long letters and so far have only had one from you (dated Dec. 29th 1940)! Now I wish we were not so far apart - then there would be no long waiting for letters. It takes two long weary months for an Air Mail letter to reach you, Eileen - so you will have to be patient. I shall send you an occasional Pan. American Airways letter which should reach you in two weeks' time - by 'occasional' I mean once a fortnight because it leaves Singapore once <sup>every</sup> fortnight!

Do you know young lady that I love you so very much more today than when I wrote to you a few days ago? I shall go on loving you more and more because you can never be loved enough. I have



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Often thought what would have happened if we had not 'found' each other; what would have happened ~~me~~ if we had drifted on and never known that we loved each other - you, thinking that I had ceased to love you and I thinking that you would never love me. When you wrote to me last January I knew that you had come to the cross-roads in your life and how I dreaded the thought of you taking the other road. What that other road was I do not know - may be you will tell me about it some day. It would have been an awful mistake, Eileen, if you had gone that way, while you loved me. And now that you have chosen I know that you will never be sorry. Our road through life will be broad and straight, my darling. We are sure to meet sorrows on the way but then everyone has sorrows; we can share them together as we will share our joys. No matter how badly things may seem to go with us we shall always have each other and we shall always have our love to pull us through. We are so very lucky to love each other as we do and to love as God meant people to love each other. We are lucky in having our religion because everything depends on that, Eileen; I want to be better for your sake because I know you are good. Sometimes I wonder if I shall ever be worthy of you and your love - I shall try hard, my darling. Do you realize that during all these years that you have been a sort of shining light for me and that loving you made me want to love God better. I shall explain this all so much better when we meet again.

I find myself day-dreaming recently. I dream of happy days in the future with someone whom I worship and always shall



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worship; I dream of long talks together about the past and the present, of long walks in the country, of summer days at Killybegs and Donegal; I dream of the day when I shall beat you at Golf and Tennis and Swimming and everything else! Eileen, my own darling, we have so much time to pull up for; so many things to do that we should have been doing all these years, so many places to see. It will not be too late when the war is over. I could not have married you before the war began because I had not a practice of my own nor had I got money to buy one. You see I gave all my money to my father during my two years in Birmingham - I owed him that much thanks for all he did for me. So you understand, Eileen, that we have not found each other too late.

My darling, we love each other and we are sure of it because we are grown-up and no longer children. So will you please marry me, Eileen? It is not how I wanted to propose to you but at present it must be done on paper; some day I shall ask you properly. May be it is not fair asking you such a vital question since you haven't even seen me for years. If you do not wish to become engaged just now, Eileen, I shall understand - I leave it all entirely to you. As we love each other, may be you do not consider that an engagement is necessary. In many ways I think it is not necessary - I know that I shall love you always and shall never love any one but you as long as I live. If you do wish to have an engagement, do you think I should write to your people about it all. Oh, if only I were at home now it would all be so very simple. You will be the happiest wife that the world has ever known because I



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shall spare no effort in making you happy.

You will find me a very useful man about the house - you should see my mending and my sewing and my polished buttons! I ~~am~~ still do all my own work because I still refuse to have an Indian sepy as a batman. The Indians consider us poor Christians to have very low caste and so they are very loathe to work for us at all! I am very fit in Malaya because I have so much exercise. Today I had a game of football in the rain and mud. It reminded me of Queen and all the games we had there - I did enjoy my Queen days because I found the secret of using those days well. May be you were happy there too, Helen; you loved your Camogie - I was always so very proud of your prowess on the field, though why I should have taken it upon myself to be proud of you, I do not know because I had no claim even to your friendship - we were very distant friends and I had to worship from afar!!

A few nights ago we had a route march from 6.30 p.m. - 11.30 p.m. Well, the rain came down in torrents continuously for those five hours as we marched through jungle, marsh, and plantations - and yet it was wonderful. I love the rain and I love to feel it beating on my face and running down my neck! (he has got queer taste!). As usual I was in charge because my O.C. has handed over all the training to me. It was grand in the darkness of the forest - so many weird animal noises, there were fire-flies everywhere among the trees, in fact some were like Christmas trees lit up with fairy lights! I knew the way perfectly because my baby Austin had done good work in that direction early in the day.



Well, it was good to get back home, have a bath, and creep into bed! Maybe we'll go trekking together some day, Cileen.

I have made a welcome discovery - a beautiful lake about 4 miles away from here. So when day is done, and shadows fall - besides dreaming of you - I get a lorry out, pack a dozen men into it and off we go for a swim. They do enjoy it and so do I. It is not very orthodox in the Army to go off swimming with Indian troops but also I shall always be found doing the unorthodox! After all they are human beings and why shouldn't I take them for a swim after a very sticky day in the sun. Most of them are excellent swimmers and have been swimming up and down their beloved Indus since childhood days.

I want to tell you more about my job in the Field Ambulance but I am not allowed to. Neither can I tell you about the situation in Malaya and what the prospects of war are here. I want to know all about Belfast and what happened during the air raids but I shall have to wait until the war is over before I can hear about it. My sympathies lie with people whose homes have been wrecked - it must be awful in Belfast during these days but people will get used to it all as they have done in England. I pray each day that you and yours will be safe from all harm. It must worry you, Cileen, to be at Omagh with so much happening at home. What wouldn't I give to be at home in times like these (I am always saying this). Maybe we exiles are all like that - pushing to be at home always! And yet real exiles who are domiciled here love Malaya and never want to leave



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it. I am sure it 'grows' on people because it is a pretty country. I would like to see more of it but I have no time for gallivanting around even though my O.C. managed this long week and up in the highlands!

My darling, what have you done to me! I start writing to you and I never know when to stop; I forget about poor you reading it all and growing tired towards the end. I will not write any more this morning (1 a.m. Monday). Before I crawl under my mosquito net I must tell you again that I love you and I shall always love you, and only you.

Good night and God bless you, Cileen. I never forget you in my prayers and I never shall.

Ever yours,  
Frank.

P.S. My love to all at home and also Frances.

Frank.