



~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
~~XXXXXXXXXX~~
27th Field Ambulance,
Malaya,

24. 5. 41.

My dearest Eileen,

Do you mind very much if I make my letters a sort of diary? I want to write to you so very often while I have some time to do so instead of waiting for the fortnightly air mail. You see, my darling, the time may come, when letters may have to cease entirely and I have so very much to tell you before that should happen, that I must write you a line or two daily. No matter what happens in the world, Eileen, always remember that I am loving you every day we are separated. If we should be cut off from each other by letter or cable, it cannot make any difference to our love - nobody can ever take that away from us. Poor Hitler himself could not stop me from loving you more and more! I want so much to write you a short note every day and tell you that I love you. I have loved you in the past Eileen when I thought it was so hopeless loving you, but I never dreamed I could love anyone so much as I now love you, my darling.

Life in the tropics is not easy but strangely enough I like it in many ways. Many officers miss the social life of India kindly and so they hate Malaya. My philosophy will not allow me to be miserable - I can be very happy in a crowd of friends and I can be happy without them. I have heaps of work during the day and when that

is done. I have my thoughts and they are mostly of someone far away from Malaya and she is dearer to me than all the world. So I really spend my spare time with you, Eileen. I have got something to live for and I am lucky in that respect - so many people nowadays have nothing. It puzzles me sometimes to hear ~~the~~ men grumble about life in Malaya - some make the topic a good excuse for hard drinking. Maybe I should be very thankful that drink news appealed to me; I have always disliked the taste - so I am no hero to be able to keep off it.

I have had another sleep-er and similar to last one. I set out on a night march at 8 P.M. last night with the Field Ambulance. It was terribly hot and sticky - not a breath of air anywhere. We marched for 3 long hours and I did manage to get into bed at 5 A.M.! You see we have halts every hour for 10 minutes and at each halt everyone just lay down flat by the roadside and on the road and slept soundly! Heaven only knows why we were not devoured by mosquitos or bitten by snakes! We covered about 22 miles and though we were all very tired, it was a pleasant night. The forest was so dark that we had to resort to matches to find the way - even though this is against all the rules! I had a "sleep-in" this morning but I was working all afternoon. Then came a football match, and that was grand too - we drew with the strongest team in the town! The men have wonderful stamina; they all played well in spite of the night march. Don't you think it's time I went to bed, Eileen - I am a bit tired. Good night my darling and God bless you. (I say Good night to you every night of my life; and every morning I say "Good



Morning, Lileen" - do you ever hear me?)

25th May: - My darling, it is now 11 P.M. on a lovely Sunday night. I have been out to dinner with my Mayo friend and his wife; they live about 10 miles away from here. They are terribly recent to me because they know I have no friends in Malaya. We have the usual discussion on the Irish question and it would be settled long ago if we had our way! That reminds me to tell you that I met a Queensman the other night - name is Reid and he did law at Queens. I remembered him immediately; he was a very prominent figure as a student and was President of the S.R.C. one year. He is tall, thin, and very dark. He is one of the ~~the~~ very few non-Catholics I have ever met who holds that Ireland should not be partitioned. You would love him, Lileen, but he is married to Dr. Mary Welch and soon he is leaving here to join the R.A.F.! It seems that Bradley McCall is now Chief Public Prosecutor in a certain large Malayan town nowadays! It also seems that Irishmen are the leaders of everything in Malaya!

I had an interesting talk with a Major-General (Medical) a few days ago. Immediately he "diagnosed" me as hoth of Ireland and told me that Prof. W.W.D. Thomson's son is not far away from me in Malaya! He is in the Army too and loves it! He is luckier than I am because he is in a Military Hospital and he sees lots of cases, while poor me has to do military work all day and all night! Still I don't mind a lot, Lileen, because I love you -



and I want to go on loving you. I have managed to love you just a little bit more today - how on earth I squeezed in another bit of love since yesterday I do not know! Maybe it is because today is Sunday and on Sundays I am always nearer to you. I need not ever tell you again, my darling, how hard I pray for you, that God may bless you and keep you safe from all harm. Surely He would not allow us to lose one another now after such a long time. I hate to think what would happen to me if I ever lost you, Eileen. I must not think of such things when writing to you.

I wonder what you are doing now? Are you at home for the week-end or are you having a quiet time in Omagh? Sunday evening always fascinated me at home - it was so peaceful. Our whole family always had to turn out to evening devotions. I had a peculiar habit once-upon-a-time of walking all the way from Cliftonville to the Falls Road with one, Joe Tierney (whom I did not like!) every Sunday after devotions! And I always travelled via Springfield Road and may be you can tell me why! I was usually punctual and never caught a glimpse of you at all, Eileen. And yet if I had met you and tried to talk to you, the words just would not have come! I am not shy and timid any more - two years working in a Birmingham Plum made changes; 1½ years in the Army made more changes; but I am still the same Frank Murray in that I love you with all my heart. I often laugh when I think of Mrs Savage's parties and how hard she tried to "fix" things up between us! And what a failure she was!



And now we have come together without any "match-makers" to help us along! I rather suspect that He must have had a lot to do with it - we can never thank Him enough for being so good to us. I don't think there is anything quite so wonderful in this world as two people loving each other as we do, Lilian. You must be fed-up reading my new letters and all the things I write but I write down the things I think about. I wish I could tell you everything that is in my heart - everything about you that I love - but maybe you would not like that. Compose it would take too long and the pencil planes would refuse to take such a load across the Pacific and the Atlantic! If they knew how much love I send you in each letter they would complain about it!!

And now to bed and my dreams. I read myself to sleep with a few pages of "Twenty Years a Growing" (Maurice O'Sullivan) and my "Golden Treasury of Irish Verse"! Good night, my darling, and God bless you.

May 26th - Another day has gone and how quickly it has vanished. Working to work hard can be a pleasure and yet you would hardly believe the awful year of idleness I spent in India! Never had to work in the afternoons and though most people spent a few hours in bed each day I managed to escape that bad habit. And now working every afternoon is grand especially in Malaya, where an idle life would drive me crazy. I do pity European wives in this place - they have nothing to do all day long while their husbands are at work. However it's the same in most Eastern countries.



I forgot to tell you that I made a great discovery yesterday while scouting around in my "new" Austin Seven (I'll tell you later about my new car!). I discovered a very wonderful mountain stream away in the hills outside the town and several large pools deep enough to swim in. I hastened to get out four lorries, put 50 men aboard, and went off full steam ahead for the hills. We had a glorious time in that stream. There was a quaint wooden bridge across it - about 20 feet high - and in the men all dived or jumped. It was much deeper than we thought and could not reach the bottom; also much pleasanter than the lake we went to last week. I took some snaps and if any are good I'll send some to you, Eileen.

I wish I could tell you more about conditions and people in Malaya, but you understand that I cannot write a peace-time letter to you during war time. At present I am writing this letter in my room at my bedside lamp and it gives only a very faint glimmer of light! I know well that my surroundings will not always be so congenial but I cannot tell you about any changes until they have actually taken place.

Today I received my badge as Honorary member of the local Surf Club; ^{shall} I keep it as a souvenir and show it to you some time, Eileen. I have always loved horses but have never been to a race-meeting. There were races in Rawalpindi every week but I never bothered about them - I had heard too much about the dust!

Oh, why did you make me love you so much, Eileen! Now we are thousands of miles apart and I have to write to you all about it,



instead of telling you all about it. Good night, my darling, and sleep well, God bless you.

May 27th

Do you realize, Eileen, that I am looking at you now as I write my diary to you? Yes, it is a good snap and I have kept it all these years and it looks nicer than ever before, to night. It is a School Camogie Group and you are sitting at the beginning of the front row with your head bent softly to one side! Mattie is standing just at your elbow. It is the only snap of you that I have ever had - and this one has a story. On one of my visits to Castlewellan, Frances gave me a copy of it, but not the negative. So I proceeded to have a negative manufactured and put on glass. I was a very poor student in those days and it cost me a small fortune! Then I had several enlargements made!! The trouble you gave me in those days, Eileen, and yet I loved it all! I have been thinking all evening about a certain trip the Gaelic Football team made to Dublin. I paid a visit to a small Souvenir Shop in Talbot Street accompanied by Brendan Murray. When I had finished my shopping Brendan remarked "You must be very fond of her!" - and my reply was - "Yes, very." That same night I shared a room at the Hotel with Mr. O'Quinn, Cunningham, and Gallagher. As we lay in bed in the darkness, the clever one (Joe Cunningham) suddenly suggested that each one should, in turn, describe the girl he of his dreams! I was a simple chap in those days and so when my turn came I gave a detailed description of Eileen O'Hane - and of course they had a good laugh!

When, oh when is your letter going to arrive, Eileen Oze?



You wrote me a letter on December 29th and now 5 long months
without another - and I would give anything to read that letter now. Why must
we be so very far apart; why cannot I jump aboard the blipper and fly home to
you for a few days at least. As soon as this war is over I intend doing this.
All the mails are delayed nowadays since trouble began in the Middle East -
how I dislike the Middle East for holding up your letter! I had a strange
dream last night - I had sent you a letter by sea-plane and as the machine
was flying over the waters of Belfast Lough it suddenly crashed into the sea
and its tail went first - and down went my letter with it!!

I have had a pic-nic morning with the troops.
Actually we did a lot of work but I picked the Mountain Stream as the site
of our operations. I led the Convoy out of camp in my Austin. The new
Austin is an old one, sports model with no windscreen! But it is very
cool to drive in and has much better speed than my old one. I saw dozens
of marvellous butterflies today, up in the hills while we were out. Their
wing-span was the same as my birds; they were all black except for a
red head, and three brilliant green stripes on each wing. When I see
something beautiful I always wish that you were here to see it with me.
Some day we shall see everything together no matter where we may go.
Do you think anything or anyone could ever separate us once we meet
each other again? I am sure they could not. Today has gone and still
I love you a little more today. Is it possible to be too much in love
with somebody, Ellen? I must give you all my love and I shall
always give it to you. Bed is calling once more! Good night my darling
and God bless you.



May 28th

Well, Eileen, how is your heart today? Mine has been a bit heavy because I have had more time than usual for thinking. The "might-have-beens" have cropped up again! What would have happened to us if there had not been a war? Of one thing I am sure and that is, that we would be together now and probably married - if you ever would marry me, Eileen. I have been very unfair to you my darling in saying that you were the cause of our drifting - it was my fault for being so stupid in leaving home; for being so stupid at Queens and elsewhere in annoying you with my queer ways of pursuing you; for being so stupid and headstrong in Birmingham when you tried to make things up again. You said that you wanted to be my friend but instead of seeing that that might grow deeper than friendship I was stupid enough not to accept because I wanted your love Eileen. Now I thank God that everything has been cleared up now and that at last we understand each other and love each other. It is what I have longed for and prayed for all my life, at least since our Ranafast days. I used watch with lively interest any chap in Belfast who were likely to snatch my Eileen away from me - while I did nothing about it! I was worried for a long time about my neighbour, Seán Bowe in case he should succeed; I even prayed that he would not! I did not want you to marry him because... well, because I wanted to marry you! I was glad to hear that Larry Higgins married recently and that his bride was not Eileen O'Kane. I knew he was very friendly with Felix and I thought sure he would fall in love with you. He must be very, very blind if he did not see in you, Eileen, everything



that I have always seen in you and loved in you.

I should like to hear Frances' opinions about love! Is she very, very happy? She was an avowed man-hater at one time and now even she has been won over by the enemy! I do want her to be as happy as we are going to be, Eileen, - even as happy as we are now. My darling, can you imagine how happy we shall be when we meet again after such a long time. I often try to picture it all and each time it becomes sweeter.

Do you really think Eileen, that this letter will ever end? You must have a headache by this time or else you are very tired of it all. If you would rather have shorter letters please let me know. I must tell you about today in Anlay before I go to bed. It was pay-day for the troops and as I was in charge of the money I was kept on the alert. There was another football match in the evening at 5 P.M. and again we drew 1-1 with the same Good local team. It was terribly hot and sticky. I did think of a certain football match at Cornigan Park - the Gerson Cup Final - when I played so very badly and you were watching from the Grand Stand with the rest of the O'Kane family! If you only knew how nervous I was that day because you were watching. I was always surprised at the humor of family and how little interest they took in games. I have been in football matches, hurling matches, tennis matches, and big athletic meetings since I was a boy at school and never once did anyone from Bellefontaine come to see their beloved Frank!! He probably was not worth watching anyhow!



I really must end this letter soon and I really must go to bed now! Good night once more, my darling, and God bless you.

May 29th :- You will be surely glad to learn that this really is the end of my long epistle. It must be awful reading it - I would not care to read it through. How you even more to day, Cileen, and I love writing to you so please understand why my letter is so long. I shall write to you every day when at all possible and should I miss a day (and I shall have to) I'll give you a double dose the following day! You shall have five letters per month - providing Pan-American Airways do not let us down. Cileen, my darling, write to me often, I need ^{your letters} them very badly and soon I shall need them desperately (I cannot tell you why until next week). I wish it were possible, then I could tell you everything about my work, my daily routine, and my future moves etc. I am allowed to tell you that I awoke this morning in wonderful form and the result was that at noon when most of the work was done and I was "drizzling" in perspiration, I made a sudden heading dash for my bathing costume and away I went to my mountain stream. I had the pool all to myself and had a glorious swim; water was icy cold and you can guess what a relief it is to jump into it. I must show you my mountain stream some day, Cileen!

When you write to me Cileen, please tell me all about yourself - your thoughts, your work, your holidays, your friends. All these things I am interested in; I want to know you much better, though I know enough about you to love you forever and ever.



Thank God there haven't been any Air Raids recently in Belfast. Is all well at Spring Villa, Cilein? And just how much have you told them about us? And do they look with favour upon it all? Do you want it all kept terribly secret, Cilein? I don't mind telling you that I want to stand on the housetops and tell the whole world about our love. Always remember Cilein that I have always loved you and I shall love you until death. I could never change; I could never love anyone else but you; and I shall be true to you, my darling, as no man has ever been true to woman before. I am happy even though I am so very far away from you, because now I know that you loved me and that is what I have lived for all these years. The day soon be over and we may meet again very soon but no matter how long the waiting may be I can only love you more by waiting. You have all of my love now and it will always be yours.

I hope this letter reaches you soon. Good bye, Cilein, and may God bless you and keep you.

Ever yours,

Frank.