

27th Field Ambulance,

c/o Base Postal Depot,

Bombay,

Saturday, August 23rd.

My dearest Eileen,

I sent off your usual six-day letter this morning and here I am on the next one. I have a miniature album of snaps all ready for despatch to you to-morrow morning. "Journey through Malaya" is the title. There are no wonderful snaps in this lot but you may get some idea of my 500 mile trip through this lovely country when you see these 23 pictures. I am sending them by ordinary air mail which travels by air to Durban and then by sea to Britain. I now address all your letters to Loretto Comunt, Omagh; if you want me to change this please let me know. Your last letter, the seventh, dated June 23rd arrived a few days ago. You are spoiling me with so many letters, Eileen; I am not accustomed to all this attention and it may go to my head - as they say in Belfast!

My dearest, I want so much to tell you how much I really love you. I try to compare it with the height of the sky and the depth of the sea - and yet that cannot give you any conception of the height or depth of my love for you. I do know that I could never love you enough if I were to try every day for the rest of my life. I only love you more and more the longer we are separated and I do not have to try at all. I know that I am not good enough for you, Eileen, and I do not deserve to have you as my wife, but I can make you happy. My dearest, have you ever thought how happy we shall be when we meet again - we are happy with our love even though we are so far apart. What will it be like when we

have each other always near by. I feel so sure of myself, Eileen, since I have found your love - so sure that our marriage will be the happiest that ever was. I often try to imagine you as my wife, you whom I have always loved, to see you every day of my life. Oh, how could God have given me a greater gift; and now I pray to Him to make me worthy of your love. With you loving me I can do anything, Eileen.

I have just returned from a party given by my men in U's lines. It is 11.15 P.M. and I am sleepy, but not sleepy after a hectic day out of doors. I have been out training all day until 6 P.M. with the men. It was hard work and we managed to snatch a bite to eat at 2.30 P.M. instead of midday - I had my usual bully beef sandwiches! Later we had a grand swim in the sea. I must have run about a mile up and down that beach today; I was so full of joy that I found running and splashing in the waves very expressive of how I felt. I owe all this happiness to you, my darling, so how can I ever love you enough. I have purposely omitted lots of "darlings" from my recent letters as I thought you might think it too, too loving. Please, Eileen, tell me about this and how you react towards "darling"! News came in today that a Soviet Major is joining the Field Ambulance to-morrow and that my dearest colleague is moving instead of me. Should I remain permanently behind here I shall become a Captain soon, but that is the least of my troubles in this life. I have never harboured after power or fame; there are so many much more important things in life to do. The party to night was an open air affair with petrol lamps to light up the arena. I was the only officer invited to this show - and were the other fellows! We had songs, dramatics, and dance. Several of the men dressed up as Indian women (duly veiled etc) - this dancing was superb, and the songs have a good haunting note. Good night and God bless you, my dearest.

SUNDAY - AUGUST 24th : Do you know that I am the happiest man in the world today? There is no real reason why I should have been so very happy this day. May be this was more like a Sunday at home than one in the wilds of Malaya, may be I thought even more about you than ever before, may be it is because I love you more than ever before. A new major Selby arrived today and I like him very much on first acquaintance. He brought some good news from the powers above concerning myself; I cannot give you details about it but it means that I shall probably remain with this unit as a major. My Belfast colleague is due to leave in a few days time, I shall tell you all about him when we meet again. Heaps of new Snaps arrived today and they are all grand. Oh why can't I show them to you now, my dearest; we could sit side by side and pore over them one by one. They are mostly of palm trees and sea, but I know you will like them - they are like pictures from the South Sea Islands. May be I am stammering and am not in Malaya at all. You know that I am not really here - how could I be, with my heart and mind and thoughts ever with you at home. So the only thing I have left in Malaya is a 'robot' which walks around without a heart or mind! I was swimming in the sea today and oh, it was grand (by that I mean it was very much). I swam away out so usual among those waves and my O.C. was really scared in case I did not return to him in shallow water! And all the time I was thinking of you and wishing you were there to enjoy the waves. So I can only share my pleasure with you in thought. It is all so different from my blue Atlantic waves; the water is warm and when one leaves the water one starts perspiring as if he had done some violent exercise on a hot day in summer.

How is your Golf, young lady? You ought to be ashamed of

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yourself with your handicap still at double figures. I think you had better take up the better game (tennis)! But my dear child (!) you shall never say that you beat me at tennis; why, I would not even need a bit of practice to beat you! I shall take up golf as a sideline and to show you that you are not quite so invincible as you fondly imagine! I shall needs lots of dancing practice before gracing a ball-room floor with you, my dear one. Naturally my dancing is at a standstill - in fact it has never functioned properly! Should I be transferred to Singapore then I might have some chance to learn the latest steps but alas this is most unlikely.

Always tell me about your people in your letters; I want to know them all well before I actually meet them. I want to love them and I know that I shall. It will be such a happy moment in my life when I meet them all for the first time. You know that I want their love - especially your dear mother's. Should you have any news of my father or Lisa, please let me know, Helen; you must have lots of information from your uncle and Auntie (O'Kelly). I am so glad that my father has been kind to both of them - I could never imagine him to be otherwise - but because they are your people, my dearest, makes it so much nicer. You know well enough that you will never have to ask my father any favours; you will have his love because of your own self and because you will soon be Mrs. Murray (does it sound alright, Helen?). You were the first to have ever entered 'Beechwood' as a future member of the family and I am sure you were made welcome because it looked as if all the Murrays would eventually become aunts and uncles. You know I had thought of becoming a missionary doctor in Africa at one time. When in Birmingham & I was a member of the local Catholic Medical Society and met several priests from Africa who made

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are interested in this work. And now I find myself in the tropics and have sampled what a missionary doctor's life would be like in Africa. It is so very sad to think that India is teeming with Methodist, Church of England, and Presbyterian missionary doctors, but never once have I heard of any Catholic ones. Most Protestant missionaries are financed by wealthy American and English Societies; also the Catholics seem to have no money. And may be it is better that way because our converts are genuine and not bought over!

Good night and God bless you, my dearest one.

MONDAY - AUGUST 25th - Life is strange in Malaya. One does not get that awful feeling on Monday mornings of starting work again after a long week and. One just starts off the same as on any other morning of the week. Life could be very dull in this camp and it is dull for most folk around me, but I can honestly say that there is not a moment, night or day, when I am not happy and very interested in life. You can never realize what you have done to me, Eileen; I do not miss cinemas, dances, clubs because I now have you - and you are a full time job! My own dear one, I have loved you today in a very special way that I have never loved you before - I could not love you any more even if I tried very hard. How would you like to live here in Malaya - no golf, no games, no music, no news, no pictures, no dances, no new black frocks! You would simmer all day and be eaten alive by mosquitoes and other animals by night! You would hang your starchy frocks on nails in the wooden walls - the said walls are a horrible black colour thanks to a good tarring! You would have to sleep on a very hard bed and be rudely awakened during the night by rain dripping in through the roof! You would never have a decent bath nor a decent light nor a square meal! You would tramp on sleeping snakes in the long grass - and my poor Eileen would

be no more! Would you be frightened, my dearest, were you to hear a rustling noise in the thatch just now? You wouldn't because you would know that the noise is from the poor little lizards in the roof having a spot of supper (flies!). My dear Ellen, if you feel sorry for me in my forest home, you may save your sorrow for a more deserving cause, as I love this life - it appeals to me and so I can make the best out of it. Your love has been such a tremendous help and I could not have managed without it - there is no excuse for me not being happy.

Today has been a quiet one and I sat all day painting - or rather painting signboards! So, my dearest, among my other accomplishments you will find me a very skilled house-painter! You will not appreciate what a treasure I am until we are married and you find out how useful a husband I shall prove to be around the house!! Oh, Ellen, won't it be grand when we have our own home and be always together - the happiness we shall know then. Surely we have found the secret of being happy in this life. I know that we shall never be sad again as long as we live, unless we are parted - and that will never happen, please God. This awful separation will end in God's own time but how I do pray to Him to make it as short as possible. We have now got so much to live for, so much to look forward to, that waiting for each other can be so easy. The war will soon be over and you will soon find yourself in my arms, a place you have never been before but <sup>to</sup> where you really belonged ever since we first met in far-off Ramafort. By the way did you visit the scene of our first meeting place, when you were in Doregal?

Has Felix bought a practice yet or a partnership? The former is much more satisfactory - the latter are always fraught with trouble and misunderstandings. Practices in the north of Ireland are rather speculative in

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many ways but Felix is steady and a good worker, and that is half the battle won. Give him my best wishes for the future when you write to him again.

Good night, my Eileen, and God bless you.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 26th Many, many years ago when I was a Medical student in my first year at Queen's I was very keen on Anatomy. I learned then that the heart obeys the "all or none Law" and I knew that my heart was obeying the all law! (This law really refers to heart muscle!). My heart was giving all to you Eileen in those days and now today it has not changed with the years, and it never can change no matter how long I may live. My dear Eileen, do you never grow weary of reading all about my love for you; I send it to you every day because I feel that I have to tell you how much I love you. Besides you asked me once upon a time to tell you over and over again of my love for you. I have been reading your letters again this evening and counting my treasures (seven up to date) - thank God none have been lost en route. Please let me know if any of my letters have failed to reach you - it is almost impossible for any to be lost as they travel all the way by plane. I have often tried to imagine what that journey must be like - I should dearly love to travel with one of my letters one of these days and deliver it to you personally. I could easily be back again on duty in a very short time in Malaya. Oh my dearest, surely our stay will come soon. That is why we must think only of that stay and the happiness it will bring to us, that will keep us alive in the midst of such gloomy surroundings that accompany all wars. Think of the joy that peace will bring. I know so well that it will be a lasting peace and that we shall be allowed to live in the knowledge that our home will not be wrecked by bombs. Don't you think it is very wonderful that we are so happy in times such as these. We would not have such happiness and contentment

unless we truly loved each other in the proper way. Waiting can only make one  
 lone stranger; suffering can only make it deeper. Surely we were meant for each  
 other, else how could we become engaged so far apart and after so many years  
 during which we had ample opportunity to meet so many other people of the  
 opposite sex. No young lady that I ever met ever could compare with my Cileen  
 - and I did compare them with you, my dearest. Do you think it was a queer story  
 that I took when I was a lad "I shall marry Cileen & have no nobody!" Those are  
 the actual words I used in the solitude of my Beechwood study one September  
 many many years ago.

My dearest, I have made yet another small snapshot  
 album and it is entitled "Whispering Palms". There are only 16 snaps in it  
 and they are all "much of a muckness" - all waving palms on tropical  
 beaches! However you will see the new revised edition of "view from my back  
 window". I shall send them by Air Mail via South Africa and they should  
 reach you in 6 weeks time - if the Iranian war does not upset the plane  
 service. I made a small album for Mna too and I know she will be very  
 interested in them. I had rather a strenuous forenoon today in swampy jungle  
 and jungle swamp! We hauled many miles during our 3 1/2 hours walking,  
 climbing over logs and perilously narrow bridges, and perspiring! Still I love  
 this kind of life; it is so much better than being cooped up in camp all day  
 long in the forest. I did not forget to thank God for giving me health and  
 strength to be able for all these feats of endurance. I was rather ashamed of  
 the huge lunch which I ate afterwards! So many chaps just can not  
 endure this climate, it is so exhausting; they do not eat properly and so they  
 readily fall victims to all the diseases going in a tropical country. Yes



evening, my Golden Treasury of Irish Verse was unearthed, and it is a treasury of gold.  
 "Shall glad your heart; shall give you hope, shall give you health, and help, and hope"  
 (My Dark Rosaleen). I have not forgotten that I am an Irishman and I never shall.  
 Good night and God bless you, my own Eileen.

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 27th - My own dear one, I have just come indoors from looking at a very wonderful sky. It was so cool and pleasant out there among the trees; and then to see myriads of twinkling stars among the branches and that moon which seemed to hang as a fairy lantern from the tree-tops. As I stood there and looked away towards the north west - towards Ireland and you - I wondered what you were doing on this August afternoon at 3.0 p.m. I wondered what were your thoughts and were you happy. Did you have that awful end-of-vacation feeling? You poor darling must leave your seaside home and go back to Dúngra - and work! How can you possibly concentrate in your teaching while you are in love?? And yet being in love can make work so much easier and more interesting. This beautiful night reminded me of a similar one in 1930 when I stood in the garden at Beechwood and looked up at a starry sky and looked away to the South and Kilkeel; wondering what you were thinking about and hoping that you loved me. I was a romantic schoolboy then, and my head was full of knights in shining armour winning the hand of a fair lady; it was full of Jane Austen and her quaint Victorian romances. I have not changed much from those days except that my love has grown up with me and matured into something firmer than a rock, and all the while my romantic boyhood ideas persist.

I wrote to my sister, Una, today and sent her three snaps. I asked all about your visit to her and that she like my fiancée - I want her to love you, Eileen, as a sister. If it were possible for Una and all the Murray

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family to dislike you (and it is not possible), it would not make the least bit of difference to my love for you - I would only love you all the more; you shall always come first before relatives and friends no matter how much I may love them. I have not been outside the trees today and that does not mean that I have been over-smoked. I had a chance of going to town with the C.O. this evening but I declined the invitation as I had to write to Mura - besides there is nothing in the so-called town to interest me in the least! However, I heard good news yesterday about cricket. It seems that matches are played quite often on the village green - the local rubber planters and miners are very keen players. So I must get in touch with them and have a game some Sunday afternoon - but it will be no joke playing cricket here on a hot sticky day. We have a football match arranged for tomorrow on the village ground but as usual the other team will scratch or something! It is no difficult to even reach a football ground in this place. Our last station was Grand - we had all our games a few yards away from the camp away up in the hills. Won't you please have me sent back to Parak, it is so much nicer up there! My men are very happy nowadays with their gramophone, Indian records, new games (Snakes and Ladders, Ludo, and Abacosts), new football and volley ball, sweets, and foodstuffs - all came from Red Cross recently. I have started a weekly Saturday Night Revue for the men - we are going to have a royal feast this Saturday. The men love this bit of entertainment. You would kill yourself laughing if you saw our "Dramatic Society" (as I call them) rehearsing all during the week in a small tent! They take it all so seriously! At present I am fighting a winning battle for these lads and I hope it will be allowed to continue. They are far from home and their loved ones and my heart bleeds for them at times - they have not

Letters received: April 20th; May 8th; May 26th; June 5th; June 10th (+ Envelope); June 23rd & July 30th  
(From Pacific)  
The other July letters are en route.  
Frank

Get much fun in a place like this. So many folk are apt to forget them.

And now I am off to bed, young lady. Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

THURSDAY - AUGUST 28th. My own dearest, you will never know how very very happy you have made me to night. Your first Trans-Pacific letter arrived this evening and oh, it was the most wonderful letter I have ever read in my whole life - it was the longest and the most beautiful. The untold happiness that your letters and your love can bring to me - somehow I do not deserve it all. How you have put me to shame with my awful attempts to write to you. You are very naughty to sit up so late at night writing to me, but I cannot be frown with you; I am not worth all this trouble really. How could I ever be annoyed or angry with you whom I love so much. It will take me weeks and months answering your letter of today. It was dated July 30th and posted the following day from Killybegs. You had just returned from your visit to Dublin and you had so many things to tell me. I fear that you have cheated the postal authorities by putting so much into the 4p special bag! I cannot imagine that only yesterday you were a bridesmaid at Felix's wedding - I should have sent him a telegram but alas your good news came too late. You may give him my very best wishes for every happiness in the future.

I am glad you liked Una and found her so natural. Imagine giving you 2½ hours of her precious time - that's more than I have ever been allowed! So she must have loved you. My Eileen how could I possibly be annoyed with you wanting to meet all my family; surely it is natural and what I desire more than anything else. I am not annoyed that you should ask me for a ring; surely that is natural too and I love you for being your own self. You do understand that I could not send you a ring from here because it might be lost in the post; besides you would have to pay enormous custom duty on its arrival in Ireland - and I know nothing about rings. So that it would be preferable if you were to buy the ring, of course with my money. Your choice will be wise and the

any more. I shall send you a cable to-morrow saying that all letters and snaps received and ask you the price of the ring. My darling, your snap suits all the working in the back was just what I wanted. You see, its duplicate is above the center of my table and now I can have you everywhere with me (inside my cigarette case when you won't be bothered in perspiration!). Do not worry about my smoking - I only smoke two days per week because we are given cigarettes free with our food ration.

This evening we went to town to play our football match and we were beaten 5-0! Your truly was the unfortunate goalkeeper!! Really it was not my fault. Eileen, I played better than the others (vanity) and I had many more shots than they! Somehow I have never felt better and stronger in my life than I was today - and I owe it all to him. I was so happy coming back to camp in the lorry with the men and I could not fathom my happiness, quite. However when I heard that there were two letters for me I skipped to the mess, full of joy and found your letter and another from the photo man containing enlargements of my snaps. These letters will be sent to you soon.

You will be pleased to know that I am older than you a mere bit - just a matter of 47 days! I was born in December 1912 and you in January 1913 - we were almost twins! You have got very wonderful parents and I only hope that we shall be like them - that we shall always adore each other and all the while loving our children with all the tenderness and love that children need. I am looking forward to your dear mother's note to me in one of your July's letters. Eileen, please, <sup>do</sup> not ask me again to discontinue sending my letters by air throughout. You are a brick to suggest waiting for two months for my letters to reach you by ordinary air mail, but my dearest it is such a pleasure for me to know that all my letters fly to you as quickly as they can go and that you do not have to wait too long for them; besides they are much less likely to be

lost by enemy action. However you must not waste your money on expensive stamps as all your ordinary letters have reached me safely thank God. Can you forgive me for making you suffer so much in the past? I know that I have hurt you but God knows that I never meant it; my two romances in England must have hurt you terribly, but I did not know then that you loved me, otherwise there never would have been any romances. I just could not imagine either of those young ladies. What a shock it must have been to hear that I was actually married and had taken my wife to India! Why, oh why, must people invent such stories? What awful damage that rumour could have done to both of us. Some day you shall hear about it from my lips, Eileen, and you will not be the least bit jealous when you know the details. In the meantime we must continue to thank God for all that He has given us - "how wonderful are His ways". My dearest what can I give to you in return for all the homes you are offering up for me; at present you can only have all my love and all my prayers, and all my thanks. You could not send me anything or give me anything more precious than my Mass. You must love me an awful lot and yet we can never love each other enough, because we need all this love to sustain us through our married life. I with your love and devotion to support me, could overcome any obstacle in life and could endure any sorrow with you by my side. You will always have me to support you, my dearest, with all the love that I can possibly give you. We shall grow old together, but growing old can only strengthen our love and the bonds between us.

It must have been grand being in Dublin again - the Abbey, the Gate, the Metropole - and how I envy you. I spent two glorious months there at the National Maternity Hospital (Memlin Square) in my student days. There was not much work done - especially when Horse Show Week arrived. You must have been glad to see Una Walsh again - she was your great friend at Queens. Louis J. I have always

worshipped from afar as one of the greatest men in Ireland today. Thank God he believes the war will end this year - I have great faith in his predictions. Did you know that he foretold the Great Russo-German Pact of 1939 six months before anyone even dreamt of such an unlikely thing? I read all his articles and books when I was at home.

My dear one, I have to finish this letter rather reluctantly. I have not attempted to answer your letter except in parts, but I shall do it in my next instalment, which begins to-morrow! Need I tell you once again that I am all yours, that I shall always be yours for ever and ever, and that nothing can ever change me. I love you and you shall always have my love - all of it. I never want you to change as you are today. With each letter I know you better and love you more - you are so natural and honest; your heart and soul, just poured out on paper when you write to me. What could be more wonderful for me to read - I who loves you so very much.

May God bless you and keep you safe. May His Holy Mother always watch over you by day and by night; and may She keep our love ever as holy and pure as it is today.

Forever yours,

Frank.

P.S. Love to all your dear ones.

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P.P.S. I have no few interesting things to tell you, nothing to compare with a visit to Dublin. So please excuse this boring letter.

Your loving  
Frank.

SPECIAL P.S. I could you send me an occasional Irish Weekly - no matter how ancient it may be.

All my love,  
Frank