27th Field Ambulance,
c/o Base Postal Depot,
Bombay,
Saturday, September
20th.

My own dearest Eileen,

I love you with all my heart and all my being; I have given you my all, but to-night I realise that this is not enough and I want to give you much more. Your second trans. Atlantic letter arrived this morning (dated 11th August) but it reached Malaya exactly one week ago - that may give you some idea of how isolated I am just now. Oh, my own darling, how can I ever love you enough - you who have been so unselfish to me in exile, who have given me your love and who can get so little in return from poor me. To-night I am the happiest man in the whole world. With each letter that you send I become happier and happier, and I love you more and more. How many days you make my life away out here - and it could be very trying. Yesterday evening I was singing a merry tune and my typical next-door neighbour joined in and exclaimed ironically "Let's pretend we are happy" - my reply was "I am singing because I really am happy". It is true, my darling, and I owe it all to you.

You make me more and more ashamed of my letters when I compare them with yours. There is so much in your letters and so little in mine; the heart, which you have given into my trust - you put down on paper all its love, all its thoughts and dreams and hopes - and I can read it all. If you could know the joy I felt when I found your little miraculous medal pinned at the top of your letter and to think that you really sent it with a kiss all the way to me in Malaya - no wonder I am happy because

I have the love of such a good girl as you, Eileen. Your little medal is already on my chain and it rests very near to my heart - and my heart thinks it is a very wonderful medal. I shall say the little prayer several times daily in honour of Our Lady's Immaculate Conception. That precious medal will always remain in its place of honour no matter what happens - it is now the possession which I treasure above all others.

Oh, my own darling, I was so pleased about your visit to Beechwood and your detailed description of it. Do you realise that you painted it all so vividly that I might as well have been by your side during the whole visit. You even had me sitting beside you in the drawing room, looking at those photographs and pictures. You seem to have won my father's heart as I knew you would - he will always love you, Eileen, for your own dear self and not on my account at all and he would do anything for you. Father always wanted to give Beechwood to me but I always asked him to leave me out of his will entirely because the others needed it more than I did. And now I have a yearning for home and Beechwood is our home Eileen. I want to know if you are happy about the idea of us having a small practice in Belfast and living at Beechwood. We might have a hard struggle at first but I know that we shall win through eventually. Poor father never wanted to sell our house and now he has shown you every such of it as if it were your very own. I know there are many improvements to be made, but that will follow later my dearest. It was in Beechwood that I dreamed so much about you and yet in those days if I had done anything else except dream of you, you would have been terrified! I dare not have mentioned the word love to you at all. And now I tell you that I shall always love you and nobody but you. Did you really like my photograph, Eileen? I wanted you to like it very much and yet I was scared in case you would not - it was taken in my first Malaya station

by a little Chinaman, and I did not think it was a huge success. I am so glad that your photograph is probably on its way by this time and how I shall await its arrival. You will find out soon enough how ugly I really am and then you will see how false a photograph can be! Thank God we are just plain ordinary people and have no illusions about our beauty or brains! Are you very annoyed with me for calling you plain? You are the most beautiful person and character in the whole world, in my eyes - that is because I love you so much. How I wish that I were half as good as you, my darling - I do try to be, Eileen, for your sweet sake.

Your letters are all neatly tied with blue ribbon this evening. Thank God all have been received except two July letters which are on their way but are due very soon. I was worried about you for the past few days as no reply came to my 3 telegrams, so this morning I sent you off another one (prepaid) so that you could wire back quickly. We had a hockey match this evening but I could not play as I was orderly medical officer of the day. I am sorry to say that I lost my temper with an Indian officer this afternoon when I found him bullying one of my men. I am slow to anger usually and I hate rows of any kind. I was sorry afterwards that I had made such a fool of myself - in fact I was miserable until I had apologised and now I am happy again. I just cannot quarrel with people and if I do it can never last more than a few minutes because I have to make it up. My poor Eileen I am an awful man and full of faults - you will have to take me under your care and make me better. I am sorry that I made you sad by mentioning death and I promise never to write about it again. I also promise you faithfully that I shall take every care of myself for your sake, I promise not to run any risks from injury and take every precaution against tropical disease. I have never been careless about these things because I owe it to you not to be injured or fall sick unnecessarily.

I have just returned from my night round. All my children are safely in bed and they are happy. They all know when I am coming round and I hear them whisper "The major bebit is coming"! They all steadfastly refuse to call me "Captain"! My dearest, I shall write you more to morrow - it is now midnight. Good night and God bless you.

SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 21ST. I was supremely happy yesterday and yet today I am even happier - I did not imagine that the sun would set today and find me so gloriously happy. I have so much to write about that I do not know what to say first - I am sure to make a mess of things. I had another wonderful letter from you today my own darling and that is enough to make me happy; it has made me love you even more than ever before. It was dated July 15th and contained a note from Ellis - there is only one July letter outstanding now. It is wonderful that all your letters have got through safely because they travel all the way to the Cape by sea and then by air to Malaya. We have a terrific debt to pay to our good God who has been so generous to us and we shall have to spend the rest of our lives in thanking him for everything.

You poor darling, you were very sad in your letter - you were daily expecting a letter and the photograph, and nothing had come at the end of a fortnight. How I prayed with all my heart that you could have a letter from me every day and then you would not have to spend anxious days awaiting my letters. My own dearest, do not ever worry about the safe arrival of my letters - I write each day as usual and send you my diary letter once every 6 days and oftener at times. Yes, Sunday is our special day and I am never closer to your heart than on that day - I always pray harder and love you more and think of you more on Sundays. I am sorry to say that while you are attending mass for me in the morning, it is my

afternoon in Kuala and I am to be found sitting dreaming under a palm tree by the shore - dreaming and thinking of you as I look out to sea. You will always find me in the same place at the same time each Sunday - wont you please come and sit beside me some day soon. This is my Sunday routine - I get up at 7.30 a.m. and say good morning to you and start my prayers - I have told you of my precious Holy Water (I am very careful not to waste it!). After breakfast I work in my office till 11 a.m. Then I set out for the sea on our weekly pic-nic and swim with the others. Today there were six of us; we reach the shore at noon and I spent 1½ hours swimming without a break! Now, Eileen O'Kane, can you beat that? Today I was careful and swam parallel to the shore for your sake - I am never afraid, but I have given you my promise. By the way it is very easy to remain in the sea here for hours, it is so warm! When the swim was over we found a huge lunch of Curry and rice, Camp pie and chips, Apricots, fruit, Cheese & Coffee, awaiting us. At 2.30 p.m. the others went off to sleep under the palms and I went to dream of you for an hour and a half - you were praying very hard for me at that time and here was I just dreaming! I did say that little prayer to our Lady as I sat there and I kissed your tiny medal as I kiss it every day now. Do you know that a more sacred or holy kiss has never been sent to any man than the one you sent to me with Our Blessed Lady yesterday. Our love will always be a holy and sacred thing because it will ever be under Her protection.

I returned to camp at 5.30 p.m. and was about to start tea when the post came - a letter from my love, one from Una, one from an Indian Office, and a very large parcel, addressed to Dr. Murray, R.A.M.C.! I must tell you about the wonderful contents of that parcel - it was from my little Malay priest. It contained the most beautiful crucifix I have ever seen; the cross itself

is wooden and stands 10" high; the Figure of Christ is Golden and as perfect as could be. It is the standing type of Crucifix and now it is reposing on my little table in my room and how I love it, my darling. How I want you to see it and love it too with me; some day please God it will stand on our table. A smaller metal Crucifix I also found in the parcel and it too is very lovely; it is on my chain around my neck beside your little medal. Instead of the usual "INRI" above the Figure of Christ there are the full words "Jesus Nazarenus Rex Judaeorum". On the back is the Sacred Heart with two inscriptions "Behold this Heart which has so loved men" and "Father forgive them". My own darling, can you imagine how I feel about all this kindness from this good little priest whom I only met last week for the first time. He left here on Thursday last, reached Kuala Lumpur on Friday, and sent me this beautiful Gift the same day. He sent me his card and also a very sweet letter. Why, oh why do I deserve all of this, my darling; I do not understand it at times that God should be so good to me. Did I tell you that before leaving this district on Thursday last that little Malay priest left two books specially for me at the local bookshop — "Village Doctor" (Sheila K. Smith) and "What Happened to France" (Gordon Waterfield), the former is grand stuff when I find time to read it.

His letter was very sweet and he sent me a lovely snap of herself. This was the letter she had sent before your visit to Sun Hill. Only one bit of it would interest you, I deem. "Dr. Mc Closkey (R.I.P.) said, not long before his death, he hoped that you would marry an Irish girl" — and you my darling, are the Irish girl he, poor man, must have wished me to marry.

I have so much to write about in this letter and so little space to write it all in!

I am worried about the ring, my dearest, and about you in case you have misunderstood my cable agreeing that you should purchase it. Of course I meant you to buy it with my money, that's why I must know the cost because I have to arrange it all with my bank in Malaya as there is a limit to the amount of money that anyone is allowed to send outside the country during the war (each month). I know that the maximum from England is £10. Now you understand why I must know more about the ring. If you have cabled me to my Bombay address, I can understand the delay because it will probably be sent to me here by sea-mail from India! That's what happened to one of your cables to Rawalpindi. So again I say, never send any letters or cables to Bombay, address them all to Malaya, even though it is wrong.

My darling Eileen, I am going to write to Mattie, your sister, and tell her about our engagement! A circular came to my office this morning saying that officers are allowed to write to relatives or friends in occupied France or any other country in Europe. Everything will be managed by the Indian Red Cross Society, New Delhi; the letter will only have 20 words, excluding the name and address. Of course a reply will take many months but I feel that I must write to Sister Bernadette du Carmel at La Tour. It may bring her some happiness in her exile. Won't it be grand when the war is over; we shall both visit her at least once a year in France - would you like that, Eileen? My dear child, do you imagine for one moment that I shall allow you to make a pilgrimage to Lough Derg when I return home to you! You do not know how hard a man you are going to marry - we shall visit Lough Derg every year of our lives together, unless we just cannot manage it, but we must have a valid excuse! I know how hard it is, but my darling, it will be so easy when we do it together - everything will be easy then. The sleep part of course is the worst but I shall keep you awake with frequent nudges! Imagine having such a grand

feast at midnight when all was over. I am so glad that you never sleep a night at Spring Vella and that you always stay at Glen Road - you are so thoughtful for my sake. I knew so well that you could never be afraid. Do you know that in yesterdays letter you began with "My own darling Frank"? Oh, my Eileen, how you have changed from your first timid letters when you scarcely mentioned the word love at all - thank God those days are over and that you freely write down what you think and how you feel. Not a single one of your letters has been opened or censored so far and it is very unlikely that they ever will be in the future. You are a lucky girl that I did not spend this summer at Killough - all my time would have been with Fergus, Hugh, and Joe, swimming four times a day with them and romping around as they do! You would have been neglected, my darling, but I think I might have coddled for you a little, too, in order to atone! I do like playing cards, but not too seriously - I cannot concentrate well enough for serious play; family games appeal to me and I have played them since I was 7 years of age!! My own darling, never be afraid to tell me about the past - thank God it could not hurt me any more. I laughed when I read how you had made a novena for good weather so that you would avoid going to pictures with me! I have no dislikes any more and I like Nellie O'Hare now - poor girl had some difficult jobs to do for us both; she must have felt so very much in the way at times!

I am selfish enough to say that your writing is not too small and if it were large I should not have such long letters from you! I hope Felix has taken advice and started up practice in Lame or Killough - it would be grand if he gets the latter. You would all be a happy family at Killough then. Thank Felix very much for his note and his congratulations. I should love to have a photograph of the wedding group - I want so much to see one of the bridesmaids! You

See I am very much in love with her and I shall always be in love with her, some day soon I shall make her the happiest bride that has ever been known! Will you promise me, Eileen, that never again will you lie awake for a whole night on my account - I do admit that two letters and a photograph are rare events to happen at 2a.m. in the morning but never again! My eyes will always tell you the same story - I love you, Eileen and you shall never be able to see anything else in them. I love you, my darling, so much that everything I do or think is for you - they are all really for God because of my morning offering, but I know that He understands and knows all about our love and what we mean to each other. By loving each other more, we come nearer and dearer to His Sacred Heart. We have surrendered our lives and our love to Him and they will ever be under His protection; He has blessed us so much in such a short time that He could never allow anything to happen to either of us. Our home will be a perfect one because He will be our master. You must surely see, as I do, what a life of happiness and holiness too that stretches out ahead of us - happiness does depend on holiness.

I would have given anything to have seen you sit down in the kitchen at Beechwood with father and tuck in to a large turkey egg! Did you like the views from the windows upstairs? Many an hour I spent at those windows watching cricket matches instead of studying! I would give anything to be back again in Beechwood - how happy we would both be in such a home. Your little bro. Jones is quite right, I shall be true to you always - in fact you shall never even hear me say those words again because it will not be necessary.

I am sorry now that I have put off my visit to Singapore, because I should dearly love to visit the Redemptorist Church there and also the Little Sisters of the Poor. However, now that things are quiet in the Far East the powers above are

much more liberal with leave and my first port of call shall be Singapore. I shall tell them all about you, my darling, no matter whom I meet there. If your Fr. Cleary is the same one whom I know then he is a very wonderful man; he is a great friend of Jerry's and I once went along with the latter to visit him at the Monastery in Clonard. Yours is a grand idea - to have an army of Holy Souls working for my safe return. Oh, my darling, you are so good and unselfish towards me; but you are the same to everyone and that's why they must love you. Your pupils seem to love you, too - what marvellous results you have had in the exams. I am so proud of you and your successes, much more than if they were my successes. Give Dudy my congrats about passing his Junior; it proves that games do not make any difference and they do help a lot. I say he'll be a huge success on the football field always and a moderate success in all his exams - that is my ideal boy and what he should be. It is neither human nor natural to ask for brilliant exam results from young lads; they are too full of life and youth to study hard!

Eileen, my dearest I have been writing and writing for hours and still I have heaps to tell you. The bewitching hour has come again and it finds me ready for more writing; it also finds me loving you as a man has never loved a woman before or ever shall. God will not turn a deaf ear to our joint prayers. There will not be any trouble in Malaya and apparently I am sentenced to remain here for the duration. We were comparing life in Camp with prison life - this was at breakfast - and we all agreed that they were very similar, except for Sundays when we go swimming! One gets used to anything in time - now I do not notice the heat or the humidity. I am not lonely or weary, because I have got you always with me and I have got you to live for. I shall always live for you, my darling. Good night, Eileen, and may God bless you where or you may be.

MONDAY - SEPTEMBER 22nd. — My own darling, you must not spoil me with any more trans-Atlantic letters. I am very liable to get quite an opinion of myself and then poor Eileen would be ignored and neglected entirely! You know so well my dearest that this will never happen; I shall always love you, I shall always write to you daily and oftener at times - nothing in this world can stop me, not even the Japs. The war may drag on and on, but that can make no difference except that when it is over I shall love you so very much more. I am still praying that Isa's prophecy will be fulfilled and that everything will be over soon. Oh my own Eileen you must love me an awful lot if you are willing to come to Kodaiya and marry me and live in this ex climate; how it makes my love for you seem so small and unworthy. Please God it will not be necessary to make any sacrifices for me in this way, but should I have to remain in Kodaiya or India for a year after the end of the war, it would be pleasant for you in Ceylon touring for a short time under peace time conditions. You know that there is nothing in the whole world that I would not do for you my darling; I would sacrifice anything and everything for you, Eileen. I shall always be the same and never could I change in any way. Loving you is my life's ambition and pleasure and job; everything depends upon it - I could not pray so fervently or love God so much unless I were loving you with all my heart. I shall take good care of your heart, my darling; I shall keep it very close to mine and no harm shall ever come to it while it is in my safe keeping. I hope you are taking good care of my poor worthless heart; I shall never understand why you can be bothered with it at all.

I knew you would fall in love with Anne because everyone does no matter where she goes. She has been a little brick always - ever cheerful and gay no matter how things were going at home. You would not believe the amount of work that that poor child had to do in Beechwood - she had to manage everything all

by herself. She deserves more happiness than she ever gets. My father is a little different from your daddie - he expects Anne to stay forever at Beechwood and never have a day off, because he never takes a holiday. It is Annie's cross in life to humour him as much as possible and be always with him. In one of my letters to you I complained that she should not have neglected him so much, and now I find that this was an exaggeration. You see father mentions it in all his letters to me and I don't know what to think, but I do know that Anne must not remain shut up as a prisoner in Beechwood always. Can you help to solve this domestic problem, Eileen? I am very sorry to have to bring it up again. Maybe I was a bit hasty too in judging Philip, as Nina has told me that he was a wreck until he went to Knaresborough. As she put it "... father thinks no one should have nerves".

It is now 8 P.M. and I am sitting out on my verandah writing to you by lamp light - and it's raining mighty hard outside. I shall write to Hattie and my little Malay friend after dinner. My dearest one, let me know which of the numerous snaps reach you and how you like them; I have recently sent three or four of myself even though they are bad. Still they are me and I want them to bring you as much happiness as your snaps have brought me. My room looks perfect now, Eileen. You are on the centre of the wall above my table; below is a cross made of palm which I got on Palm Sunday in Hyderabad; and then the beautiful Crucifix on the table. You see I always connect you and our love with holy things, they always go hand-in-hand. Will you pray, my dearest one that I may become better and more worthy of you and your love. I have so much to live up to now that you have given me your love and devotion - I must & never lag behind at all. I shall never be able to pray as hard as you my darling, but I shall make a good attempt.

Here I am still writing to you long after dinner, and I wa[illegible],
my own darling, I love writing to you because I write as if I were talking to you and as if you were quite near to me. I am never closer to you than when praying or writing to you. I am still a very happy man and why shouldn't I be - I have got your love and that is all I have ever wanted from life. I shall never cease to thank the good God for sending you to me after so many years; how can we ever thank Him enough for all that He has done for us. Now that you have seen our future home, I want you to make plans for our future in it; you must have noticed many faults in it. Some fine morning you will awake and find yourself in Beechwood; the sun will be streaming in upon you through those large bay windows, you will hear birds singing everywhere, you will hear our cuckoo-clock chiming out the hours in the hall below - my dearest we shall be so happy then. To get up in the morning and thank God for another day, to look out upon the green lawn, the trim hedge, the Selves gate, that lovely patch of Crochet Ground, and away beyond the black mountain of Dares that you know so well. After breakfast I shall kiss you goodbye and go off on my morning round, and how I shall hate leaving you even for such a short time. You may have shopping to do or may be you will potter around the garden tending the roses and shrubs - do you like gardening, Eileen? You may even have time for a round of golf at Clontarville or Portmellan! I shall have more time with you, my darling, in the afternoons; we may go walking or even be very lazy and just sit in deck chairs in the garden and talk. We shall be so gloriously happy together no matter what we do or where we go. Do you think we could improve those fruit trees and shrubs in the back garden?? Oh my dearest it will be our home and it will be our heaven; I shall always regard you as its Queen and my Queen too. You have seen two or three happy romances recently - Felix and Nora, Frances and Roland, etc - but I promise you that ours will be happier than all of them put together. I shall work hard and pray hard and do everything to make you happy - I live for you, my darling.

[illegible]id and blind and foolish in the past, but I shall make up for the past, Eileen. Why Oh why could I not see that you loved me when you wrote to me in England; how I must have hurt you then - and yet I did not mean to hurt you.

It is now my sixth page and I have not told you how very much I love you and adore you. I am all yours, Eileen; I have always belonged to you from the beginning and I shall be yours till the end. We may have much waiting and many heartaches before we meet again, but we shall meet again and be happily married. I pray incessantly that the waiting may not be long and I know that God will hear our prayers. Our love will carry us through any trials ahead of us; our prayers will guide us safely together again.

I send you all the love that any human heart can send; I send all my own self to you (you should say that is nothing!). You know how I feel because you are in love too and you have the same feelings that words can so poorly describe. Give my love to all your dear ones at home - and to Minnie if you see them soon again; my love also to Frances and her Roland.

May God bless you, Eileen, and may He allow us to meet soon again. May our Blessed Lady shower down her blessings on you, Her faithful child.

All my love to you.

Your loving

Frank.