

27th Field Ambulance,

40 Army Base Post Office,

Singapore,

Tuesday
Monday 21st October

Eileen, my own darling,

Do you like my wonderful new address? Also I am still in the same place and very many miles from Singapore. And I am still waiting for a letter from you, my darling; it will soon be 4 weeks since the last one came. I can only blame this constant changing of my address for the delay in your letters. You know how much I love and adore you, so you may guess how I have felt all these weeks without a letter, and yet these things seem to bring me nearer to you and make me realize how very very much I love you and how helpless it would be trying to live without you, Eileen. I have loved you such a long time now that it has become more than a second nature with me; and I still go on loving you more and more as time passes. I pray harder and harder for you, my darling, and ask God to keep you safe; I ask Him to bring us together soon again and never allow us to be parted. May be I ask Him for too many things concerning you, us, and our love. Ever since I first met you I have prayed for you my darling, because you represented everything that was good and holy in my eyes; and you know that you have ever been my model and I have tried to be good for your sake. Is this a worthy motive for wanting to be good, Eileen? I know it must be right and pleasing to Him, because He appointed you as my Guardian Angel. Unknown to yourself you have been the means of saving me from disaster many, many times in the past. Why did you wield such influence over my life always? Somehow I could never do anything without your consent. I would ask myself "would Eileen approve?"

Some day soon we shall be united together and you will always be at my side
advising me what to do and how to do it. My darling, I shall always be guided by
your wisdom and your goodness. We shall automatically turn to God in everything and
precede all our undertakings by earnest prayer. It will bring a blessing on our home
and it will bring us untold happiness.

I have been the orderly medical officer to day and oh it was
just the same old day in camp - except that I sent you a 10 page letter! On the Clipping
leaves Singapore weekly now I send your letter on every 4th day - instead of every 6th
day as before - but you are having extra pages! This evening I went to our small
hospital to examine a patient there and on my way back through the lines I heard the
strains of a very familiar tune coming through the night air - it was lovely! I
could scarcely believe my ears - it was "Daily, daily sing to Mary". If you were
here and walked through these lines of barracks full of Indian troops, you would
surely say that a Catholic hymn is the last thing you would expect to hear in the
said barracks. I investigated and found an old Indian Havildar (= Sergeant) blowing
out this beautiful hymn for all he was worth on a mouth organ! He is a South
Indian Catholic, very black skin, thin and wizened; he was very proud of his new
mouth organ which he purchased in the bazaar to day. He played the hymn over
again specially for me and oh it was good to hear it played so sweetly. I thought
to myself that surely our good God was very pleased with that old man's offering to
Himself and Mary Our Mother.

I am sad this evening as I am about to lose my good friend
Thomas James - I have almost finished the book! Now, I did not ever want to
finish it at all and leave the man of no work; but the best of friends must part!
The great Mohomadan Fast ended to night - the new moon appeared somewhere in

Malaya but not here as it has rained hard all evening (the new moon ends the Fast).
There is a holiday to-morrow and the men have invited all the officers to lunch in
the lines - I love these parties, because they give me a chance of making the others very
informate when they are trying hard to be formal at these functions!

Good night and God bless you, Eileen.

WEDNESDAY - OCTOBER 22nd

My own darling, I am still here, still
writing to you and still loving you with all my heart and soul. Loving you so much
is a whole-time affair because I place it above all else in my life - except God - and He
knows that without you I could not pray so hard to Him. That is why He wants me to
love you always and I would rather die than have it otherwise. Oh, my Eileen, if I could
only express my feelings and paint you a picture of all the love that is in my heart for
you - my letters are but a poor attempt at this. I feel so dissatisfied when I have
finished a letter to you; it gives you no idea of how much I love you - I want to tell
you so much more but never seem to find words for it.

To-night I am sitting out on this small verandah and
everything is cool after the rain. It rains every evening for hours accompanied by thunder
and lightning - I do not even notice the latter any more except to admire the wild
beauty of a sky lit up with a radiant purple flash. It was a sort of holiday today
and the morning was uneventful. Then came a terrific "beam-fest" which the Mohammedans
game us for lunch! It was mostly Indian food but it was delicious. We were seated
with them even but of course at a separate table. I spoiled the whole dignity and
propriety of the occasion by sniggering at the men and pulling faces at them - the others
did not even look at the men at all! Irishmen and Australians in the British Army
are apt to forget that stoicism which seems to be essential to an English officer who
never has a sense of humour anyhow. Well, at this lunch we ate too much, and came

Away in a very sleepy mood. However I was detailed by the C.O. for a job in the sea! I was ordered to have a swim at two places along the shore and to report their suitability or otherwise for the troops to use. It seems there is a holiday camp scheme afoot at the moment and we are testing out the likely spots for a site. Anyhow I had a couple of grand swims while doing my duty! I only wish I had more clothes like this! I set out for the beach in my small Austin and soon discovered that all Malays are Mohammedans - they were observing the 'Id'. It was a pleasant sight to meet little groups of men, women, and children all gaily attired in their multi-coloured native dress. I got many a cheer from them - they were all so happy in their great feast day after the long fast. I passed by two cyclists and each had a bride on the ^{cross} handle bar - they were pretty smiling brides and each had a garland of flowers around her head. I discovered why the Indians go to bed for the afternoon! It is sheer madness to go swimming on a hot afternoon immediately after partaking of a heavy Indian lunch! I was glad to get back again to my wooden hut at 6 P.M. - ready for tea. Very relaxing, I do not really spend my time eating and sleeping! I forgot to tell you that during our feast today a gramophone played selections - the first record played was "Does your mother come from Ireland?"

We have a lovely set of hockey sticks now, thanks to the Red Cross people. I must fix up a match for the week end for the men; I wish we had more games here, but we are so far away from everything, being in this plantation as we are now. I discovered our bootmaker today making a lovely pair of brown 'Choplis' (Indian Sandals) - it appears they are for me, though I have not ordered them!! The little fellow knows that I should not resist them and shall buy them off him at an exorbitant price. I discovered today that one of my reports had drawn no pay since coming to Malaya. On enquiring I found out that he is saving up all

his money to get married with when the war is over and that during the past 1 month
he has spent 50 cents ($5 \frac{1}{2}^a$)! Can you imagine such a thing, my darling?

I have loved you to night Helen, and I am sorry about it, but I love you and
I must tell you all the events of the day. Good night and God bless you.

THURSDAY OCTOBER 23rd - My own dearest one, another day has come and
gone and still I can say that it is good to be alive! This, in spite of no letter from
you for 4 whole weeks. My darling, I hope there are no awful delays in my letters
reaching you; there should not be, as your address is straightforward while mine is
a bit complex at times! Your letters to me have to pass through so many hands before
they ever reach me; it is very annoying, but I am in the army now and there is a
war on! I love you to night with a very special love, more than I have ever loved
you before - it is more tender and deep and true than ever before. Still I want to love
you so very much more than I do tonight; I have given you all but that will never
be enough. Do you know that I can see you each stage of my life standing on the
docks at Southampton waiting for me; I can see your upturned face - you are the only
person that I can see in that dense crowd. I know that I shall run down the gangway
into your arms and that nothing in the whole world will ever separate us again.

I had a letter this evening from Iphigene. The Winseys
wrote to me a very lovely letter thanking us for remembering them in our prayers, Helen.
They promise to give me a 'Lead Mine Foster' next time I visit them at Iphigene (about
1400 miles from here!). Holiday (leave) fever has broken out in camp and everyone is
dashing off for 10 days at the various resorts. Holidays cannot be much fun in
Malaya without a boy friend; besides my life is a holiday here and so I do not need
to seek health elsewhere! This afternoon I had another swim in the sea with two other
officers (not belonging to our unit). I swam about 2 miles in and out of little

Lagoon - finding all kinds of little openings among the rocks. I am not brave
 and I am not showing off when I go off on these long swims - it is my delight to
 have a long swim and explore new channels along the coast. The sea was rough
 and wild, and that is how I like it. Will you think Capt. Buckley and myself very
 big babies when I tell you that we played about in shallow pools of water among the
 rocks when our swim was finished ?? We had crab races and were severely nipped
 in return; we explored numerous shells on the shore and found new kinds of shell
 fish. We did all the things that young lads love to do at the seaside! Need I
 tell you that I spent a very pleasant afternoon and that I wished with all my heart
 that you had been there to enjoy it with me. Crossing the ferry both wrap my
 many good friends the ferry-coolies had a very special greeting for me, and
 ignored the others! Need I say the latter could not quite understand why so
 much attention was being paid to me. It has been ~~off~~ a sort of holiday today
 - that's why I was not working. I have a big day out to-morrow starting at
 6 a.m. and here you are keeping me out of bed! My darling, you know that
 I would willingly sit up all night and write to you rather than let you down for
 a single day by not writing. It is not a duty; it is a pleasure and I love it,
 and should not be happy unless I wrote my diary to you each day. By the way
 the Wimsaps thought I was too soft about losing my promotion - they say that I
 should have demanded a transfer to another unit or station, or demanded that
 my successor be transferred in all fairness to myself! I had thought of doing all
 these things, but I decided to "stand and wait" because I love my men and they
 are loyal to me. They think as much of me now as Captains than ever before as a
 major - it did not change me and nothing ever will change me whether I am going
 up or down the ladder! My only reason for ever going up that ladder of ~~some~~

in for your sweet sake, so that you might feel proud of me.

Good night and God bless you, my darling.

FRIDAY OCTOBER 24th

I have had a very busy day, but thank God the so-called "work" was such that I thought of you the whole day through. I wanted you to be with me today more than any other day of my life - and I don't quite know why. I thought of how cruel I have been to you in the past and have been planning all kinds of ways to atone for my cruelty. I would have given anything in the past to know that you loved me, but this has ~~been~~ been God's way of bringing us together and it must be the only way, the right way. We have always loved each other and we were meant for each other; we have a strong true love and it will bring us great happiness - and it has brought us great happiness already (and we haven't even met yet). My own darling, we are many thousands of miles apart and still we are very happy because we love each other and we have faith in each other and in our prayers. There are so many reasons why I love you so much and you know them already; and yet, Edith, there has always been a certain indefinable "something" in your very soul that I have always loved and could never see in any other woman. If you will excuse my rudeness, neither of us has been given great physical beauty, so it cannot be beauty in which we have founded our love. My dearest one, you have a beautiful heart and I love it with my whole being - that is the only beauty that really matters, any other kind is very false. I am yours, Edith, for ever and ever and nothing can change my love for you. I have been reading your letter this evening and oh what happiness and consolation they bring to me. Now I am looking forward to the next one. I watch the post every day - even on days when I am sure that no mails are due - I never lose hope, and that is what makes life worth living to anyone. We hope and pray that this waiting will come to an end soon, and we shall never grow weary of hoping and praying.

I have spent the day in my small Austin as I was an "umpire" in the Festa Ambulance ~~swandances~~ - it was almost like Superintending an exam but much more exciting. The whole show was almost entirely by the sea and yet I did not have a swim the whole day long! It was hot and sticky and much glare from the sun, ^{but} I enjoyed it all. On the way to the shore I passed through a large rubber estate and there encountered a crowd of about 20 small Tamil children. They looked lovely - black faces, white gleaming teeth, and big eyes. They went wild with delight when I stood up in the car and waved to them. Later I met four small Malay boys trundling their empty tin, they hailed me and I offered them a ride. They dropped the toys immediately and soon I was speeding down the sandy path to the sea with two happy children riding on each footboard of my Austin! They were very thrilled, especially when I brought them back to where I had picked them up! You see my darling, I remembered my boyhood days and the joy of which a ride in any vehicle brought to me. I was pleased because I had made friends with them and made them happy without speaking a word of their native tongue to them. Lunch time found me in a tiny Malay village by the sea. I sat with my men and ate huge sandwiches much to the amusement of the indigents! Soon all the village boys and girls and men had gathered around us; goats sprang up from everywhere and wanted to share our lunch! The shy maidens and proud mothers peeped at us from a distance, but they were interested too - and roared with laughter when they saw our "sexualities" being evacuated through the village! We sat on a covered wooden platform with the men of the village and watched their play lands. The small boys wrestled and frolicked in the sand for our benefit; the small girls just sat and looked at us with their big eyes. I fell in love with a curly headed damsel of about 3 years of age; her eyes sparkled with wonder

And her earnings danced in the sun. All Kyalay girls wear earnings and they are very beautiful (the girls are!). Can you blame me for falling in love with my curly headed baby? My own darling, you know well that I shall never love anyone but you no matter how long I may live. I am so happy sitting among these friendly people that I made up my mind that if ever you should be in Kyalay I shall bring you to this remote village and show you my friends there. Have I bored you, Eileen? I must mean to love you. Good night and may God bless you.

SATURDAY - OCTOBER 25th

My own darling, can you guess why I am so terribly happy this night? I had a letter from you this evening - the one you sent from Kellang on 26th August before Felix's wedding. I always read through your letters very slowly every time so that I may not come to the end of them ever. It nearly breaks my heart when I reach page 3 and know that soon I shall have finished. My dearest one I should never live without your letters - they are like milestones in my love for you and as each milestone comes it marks a new dash of love and affection from my heart towards you. And now to night my heart is so full of love for you that I don't know what to say or where to begin. I cannot attempt to answer your letter to night as it is now 11 P.M. and it would take hours to do this! Eileen darling, do not worry about my safety; we have left everything entirely in His hands and He knows what is best for us. We must never have doubts; we must be sure that our prayers will be answered and then I shall be with you soon again. Do anything else in life really matter as long as we are in God's grace and as long as we love each other - we shall always love each other and we shall always love Him, because these two loves are inseparable. We could never have been so much in love if we had not His friendship and blessing. I promise you that I shall not lose his friendship once, knowingly, for the rest of my life; I shall never forget my daily prayers; I shall go to Mass and Communion every day when at all possible. Your miniature miraculous medal is always around my neck, night and day.

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and its prayer is never forgotten during the day. It is an awful loss not having our Sunday Mass here, but that does not make me careless; I only want to gain by prayer what I lose in Masses. My own dearest one, to-morrow I shall join you as usual at our Mass and my prayers will be more earnest than ever before. Why are you so good and unselfish to me - how can I ever hope to repay such devotion and love.

I had a letter today from Fr. Oshness in which he said that he had sent you the parcel as promised and also a letter telling you about the said parcel and its contents. I was a little disappointed to learn that he asked you to arrange the purchase of "ertain tickets" for him. His parcel and letter will not reach you until after Christmas but you will soon have a strange surprise from me before Christmas - in fact it should reach you in November! My darling, please do not be disappointed with my surprise when it arrives; it is meant to be my Christmas present to you, Eileen, and perhaps it (they) will look nice in our future home! So very soon in addition to your Boreen we shall soon have another item (Jean Valjean got into trouble about them in "Les Misérables"!); be patient with all my mysterious allusions to this strange present because you will soon see it (them!). I also promise you that you will soon be wearing something small, round, made of gold and it will sparkle on your fingers! Please do not ask me to wait until the end of the war; you must have it soon, my darling.

I wrote to Fr. Oshness this evening and gave him the sad news that the Irish Sweep had ceased to function. I also sent him a cheque for the parcel he sent you to cover all his expenses. My new Indian shoes were delivered by the little boot-maker today and they do look posh and are a perfect fit. They are said to be the most comfortable shoes in the world - and I quite believe it. Our usual picnic and swim have been fixed up for to-morrow. The C.O. asked me to go

accompany him to the village cinema after dinner to night, but I declined, having given my lame excuse. Your letter is more important; besides it is my act not to visit a cinema as long as I am here. My darling, do not think that I am showing off when I tell you about my daily acts; I only do small things and you are always in my thoughts at the time. I sleep on a hard bed, while I could easily have a soft one; I do not read or look at certain magazines in our mess etc. You are the only one who knows these little things and I feel that I must share them with you. I shall always want to share everything with you. We had a small inspection this morning and my successor (Major Hume) and I were together. As I walked round the barracks with him I marvelled at God's ways and how good He has been to me. There I was, very friendly with this man; I had no bitter feelings towards him or anyone else - and yet, my darling, I had been shamefully treated and have every reason for being resentful. I worked very hard for my promotion; and I worked harder when I got it. I feel the same as you do, Eileen; nobody can hurt me unless they hurt you. Oh what wonderful courage and forbearance we shall always have no matter what happens to us because we shall ever have each other and we shall never have to fight a lone battle.

My very own darling, I understand how you feel about the young man who is pursuing you in Omagh. I do want to hear all these things from you, Eileen; it is much better that you should share your fears with me. You must not be afraid again of him; he can do you no harm. Surely he will stop annoying you if you tell him of our engagement. Do not be afraid of his cleverness; you are strong and good. We love each other Eileen and surely nothing can change that - not even all the clever people in the world. This young man may continue to force his attentions on you, he may even succeed in making people believe that a romance has sprung up between you, but my darling no matter what happens I am with you always, loving you all the time

and wanting to give your courage.

I am so glad that you have met all of my people at home - you were to meet Margaret in Dingannon. She is a grand person and such a very happy soul. I conclude that Philip is still rectifying otherwise you would have met him too; I wonder what you will think of him. I could never quite make up my mind about him and I am his brother! You seem to be a very privileged person with my father; do you realize that I have never been shown the room in which I was born - and yet you have! He must love you a lot, Ellen. I am sorry about poor Anne's holiday; father does not understand young people at times - he thinks they should feel as he does (at his age) towards holidays. He is much happier working and so am I at the moment. Yes he must be a lonely man otherwise he would not ask so much of Anne.

I hope that your photograph is on its way, my darling; but I love your scrap where you are holding your golf clubs. One is pinned up over the centre of my table; the other lies before me every night on my writing pad as I write to you. Of course it is the best photograph of you, but I also like the group one where you are sitting on the grass beside Rosa. Remember, Ellen, that I am all yours, that I am loving you every moment of every day and always shall love only you.

May God bless you and may His Holy Mother guide you always.

Your loving

Frank.

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

Love Frank.

P.P.S. I have just discovered that it is only good night until to-morrow! I have got my pages mixed up! I am sorry about this Ellen, but you must have 14 pages!

OCTOBER 26th - SUNDAY : My dearest one, I have been so very true to your heart today; I have never loved you more, I have never prayed so earnestly as today. There is no limit to our love, Eileen, and still it keeps on growing. I can never give you enough love or affection; I can never pray hard enough for you; I can never do enough to make you happy. There is something I wish to ask you and you must answer me in your next letter. Do you find my letters too sentimental? If you do, my darling, I shall try to make them more readable in future.

We had a pleasant surprise awaiting us when we reached the beach this morning for there before us lay a lovely two masted sailing ship anchored about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile from the shore. Within about 10 minutes Capt. Buckley and I were swimming all round it and gazing its beauty. It was quite safe out there as there were many men on board working, so I swam a little way beyond it. When I turned and faced the shore, I saw a grand sight - it was like a picture in a Robert L. Stevenson story book! There was this graceful schooner heaving to and fro with each wave against a lovely background of a tropical shore. After lunch I went off alone down among the big rocks just overlooking the sea and sat in a shady spot and said the most fervent Rosary that I have ever said in my life. It was so peaceful and quiet down there all alone with you praying for our big intention with all my might. Then I sat and dreamed of a "Colleen whom I adore" - Eileen Olanmah; I wondered when we would meet again and I thought of all the happiness that lies ahead of us. The sea then makes me dream a lot but it is not a dream to say that I shall come back again to you soon. God will hear our prayers my dearest one, if we persevere - and we shall never relax our prayers for a moment. I want you to thank all your best ones for all the prayers they are offering up for my return - I never forget them in my prayers. I only hope that they will not be disappointed when they

meet the object of all their prayers! And you, my own darling, who prays so hard for me and goes to daily Mass and Communion for our intentions - what can I say to you that will give you any idea of the gratitude that is in my heart for all that you have done for me. God has given us everything we have asked of Him and now He will not let us down in our great request.

I shall try to send you a cable to-morrow if I can manage to get into the village. If an occasional cable will make you happy and cause to worry less about me, then you shall have one often. I had intended sending them weekly, but I found out that they take almost as long to reach you as my letters. (It is a pity you cannot see the beautiful firefly which has alighted on this page - he keeps flashing his little green lantern all over the place!). I have read your letter this morning and again this evening - I never grow tired and I love every word. How I wish I could see our new fire-screen - the first item for our new home and we shall always have a special love for it, especially as mamma made it. I wonder if my letter has reached her yet; I want her to know that I love her as my own mother. I am looking forward to your next letter and all the news of Felix's wedding. My own darling, I shall refuse to marry you - unless we have a quiet wedding, without any fuss. We shall prepare for it as God wishes us to - with earnest prayer - that is the only preparation that really matters. I am glad that you feel the same way about it as I do; we always agree on things that count in life - that's why our love is so true.

I shall love you forever and ever, Helen; nothing can change me. God bless you; Mary protect you; and may your Guardian Angel watch over you and keep you safe.

Yours lovingly,

Frank.