

Colonel CHARLES HENRY DUDLEY RYDER

Letters 1894 – 1895.

Charles and Ida were married on Sunday 27th December 1892 and these are earliest letters he wrote to her that have been kept. She is 21 and in Naini Tal (East of Delhi) with Margaret (born 16th Sept. 1893) and expecting another baby the May following.

Place names and family names are in bold to make it easier to pick them out.

Background extracted from Wikipedia:

In 1885, the British sought to annexe the rest of the kingdom of Burma. They had been concerned by the Burmese efforts to form an alliance with the French, who were consolidating their holdings in nearby French Indochina. Burma was trying to pursue the same strategy as Siam, as a buffer between the British and the French. But the British viewed Burma as their sphere of influence, and sent in an invasion force on 7 November 1885. The invaders easily overcame minimal Burmese resistance, and took Mandalay on 29 November 1885. The Burmese king Thibaw and the royal family were taken away to India. Burma was formally annexed by the British on 1 January 1886. The millennium old Burmese monarchy had ended.

*Although it took less than a month to occupy Mandalay, the British spent another 10 years to pacify the rest of the country. Over a year into the annexation, the country was still in chaos. In 1887, a 32,000-strong army led by two major generals and six brigadier generals was dispatched to quell the instabilities, and to annex the hill regions. The Burmese resistance in the low country was hammered down by 1890 but the hill regions proved particularly troublesome for the colonizers. A five-month expedition in 1887–1888 brought cis-Salween Shan states under control as British protectorates. The army was then forced to put down insurgencies all over the region. It finally brought **Kengtung** into the fold in March 1890, completing the annexation of Shan states. But rebellions broke out again in northern Shan states at Hsenwi, Lashio and Bhamo in 1892. In 1894, the British also had to chase down rebels in the Karenni states, which they had formally annexed since 1892. In the west, it took the British forces 15 months to overcome the Chin resistance before taking Falam in March 1891. But the British had to spend another five difficult years in the unfamiliar hill country to finish off the Chin resistance. Finally, in 1896, the British proclaimed the Chin to be a part of Burma.*

23rd October 1894, Great Eastern Hotel, **Rangoon**: My own sweetheart, So far so good. I couldn't begin a letter on board ship for to tell you the truth I was sick twice. I sent you off a letter as I went to the steamer in Madras. Well, we left that evening about 5. It was squally, but I got on all right till the next evening when I was sick & the following morning also. It was very fairly (*sic*) rough at times. There were only 5 out of 16 passengers at meals & I only missed once, so I was pretty fair. The people on board were all very present (*sic*). We had a four at whist, Nicholls a doctor, Paxton of the 17th MI, Fermar (?) a gold mines doctor at Kolar and myself. I won £13/12/11, enough to pay my expenses on board.

Now to tell you who the passengers were. Col. Cooke, Financial Commissioner, Surgn Major & Mrs Nicholls & 3 children, Paxton, fancy he is married with 2 children on his pay 325/- a month. He was at Bangalore on the garrison class & so poor he couldn't afford to bring his wife & children over. Then there were 2 girls going to be Sisters of Mercy, also Hodgson of the 17th MI, two small children & his sister looking after, the baby was 7 months old & quite bald. There was also Mr Fred Armfield, who turned out to be Archer, the bookie, you remember the man who made most news. My cabin companion was Mr Orr, civil master armourer, a rummy old chap, not a gentleman, but a nice old fellow all the same, rather a character in his way. Then there were a Mr & Mrs Burschar, I don't know who they were; they never came out of their cabin till the last day & then she lay down all the time & slept on deck amongst us. We arrived here about 6.30 last night; very inconvenient time to arrive. Rigby & I got our things onto ghanis (?) & then walked to the hotel.

After dinner: I've had rather a tiring day driving about for nearly 4 hours seeing the Chief Secretary, A A G Commissariat Officer & Intelligence Office. Our escort is to be 130 Gurkhas, Capt Caulfield in command & Surgn Major Lloyd as doctor.

Oh! You darling you don't know how much I miss you, I do so love you; I sent you off a telegram today and am hoping to hear from you soon. God bless you my pet. Give dear baby many kisses from me. How I wish I could kiss you again. It's so long to look forward. I wish I could be with you to love & comfort you. Keep up a brave heart dearest & love me ever so. You will be sorry to hear Capt. Birdwood died at Umballa about a week ago. Now goodnight my darling little wife, fondest love from your own loving husband, Charlie.

Address now: **Taungyi, Shan Hills, Burma.**

25th October 1894, Rangoon: My little darling, I'm getting anxious to know that you have arrived safely (at **Bangalore**). You'll be sorry to hear I've lost Jumbo; he always drove about with me, and got out whenever I did; but yesterday I forgot & left him I think at the General's house. I've informed the police & a lot of khalis are hunting about. I went & saw Dr & Mrs Nicholls off yesterday; now there's no one I know in the hotel, you know slow it is; but I'm always thinking of you. My pet, you see I've had no news of you since I left. I found out a dentist yesterday & am going to him again tomorrow. **Rangoon** is a very noisy place, so I'm always awake early. The signal gun is not far from here. The Calcutta mail has 2 guns & the Madras 3, all very loud. Today 20 khalis arrived. I sending off everything to **Meiktila Road** (*Lat. 20.866, Long. 95.843*) as they come. I've got a pony for Col. Woodthorpe & one for myself on loan from the Mounted Infantry to meet us at Meiktila. Our escort is to be 130 Gurkhas commanded by Capt. Caulfield, with Surgn Major Lloyd as doctor; a man who got the VC last year in the **Kachin Hills**. I have a fair amount of work to do, but I think now I've settled everything and shall go up to Meiktila as soon as I've done with the dentist.

You dear sweetheart I miss you every minute & that makes tears come into my eyes. The next time we're together I won't read a line of anything, but love you all day, but you've got over that stage now alas! God bless you my darling pet. How is baby? She'll be walking when I see her again¹. My health is very good.

I've just been reading 'The Queen's Necklace' by Dumas; you will like it, so I will send it to you. I can't get on at all without you, Ida, and that's a fact. I hope so for a telegram from you. I do so hope you're none the worse for your journey, you darling. I've kept your bangle on all right; it hurt the first few days, but not now. Your photo is in front of me. What a pretty wife I've got, and a sweet dear little one too. I hope you keep your accounts., especially what you owe or receive from Father. You know what a trouble it was last time. I've told the bank at Bangalore to honour your cheques as you have the ... (*paragraph ends mid sentence*).

26th October: I went out yesterday for my evening stroll & first met the Captain of the ship who asked me to go to breakfast today; then whom should I meet but Mrs. Dorman who asked me to dinner & then go to a dance at the Gymkhana today. I accepted, but have just written to say my dress clothes have gone off with my heavy baggage, an awful lie, but catch me going to dance where I don't (*know*) anybody; it's a subscription dance, so would have cost me about 20/-; not good enough.

Why no telegram from you? I'm sending off one to your Father to enquire. You dear old pet, I imagine all sorts of accidents. Just as I've written this in comes your telegram. Hurrah! I'm so delighted. Now I'm longing for letters. Poor little darling I expect you were very tired when you reached **Naini Tal**. Now I must dress to go out to breakfast.

4 o'clock. I went out to breakfast & to the dentist at 1 & I have to go again tomorrow; he is proceeding very gradually, deadening the nerve. I go also on Monday & then leave that evening. You dear little darling I feel terribly lonely without you; how I wish we could always be together. No news of Jumbo I'm afraid he's lost for good poor dog. I'm afraid I can't expect a letter from you till Monday. Ida you had better address now: Mekong Mission via' **Taungyi, Shan Hills, Burma.** - that will be quite safe.

¹ Ida **Margaret** was 13 months.

Sweetheart I long to be kissing you again. I've begun to look forward to that already. I will send you off letters as soon as ever I can; and hope you will find out the proper days for posting. Ida, I heard today from a man who was at **Taujore** where the kissing case occurred, that the doctor's wife wouldn't let her husband pay her any attention for the last 8 years; so take warning. I've got to write my English letters today. Mind & let me know how the Madras Bank account stands since I left you; if you want a new cheque book just write for one. I will send you over more money to reach Bangalore about the middle of January. How happy I would be for love in a cottage always with you, my darling, & feel every parting more than the one before.

27th October: It's only just after 6, but the steamer gun woke me some time ago. I don't hog a bit now there's no inducement to stay in bed when there's no little wifie by my side. Is baby getting rosy cheeks? I do hope so. Now goodbye my darling. Love me awfully & take great care of yourself & babies. God bless you darling, ever your own loving & devoted husband, Charlie.

27th October, Rangoon: My Little Darling, I was delighted to get your sweet letter of the 19th this morning. How I did enjoy it; I read your letters with even more eagerness than I did your very first ones. Yes, sweetie, I don't think you were very liberal with your kisses, but we'll make up for it when we meet. Yours is such a sweet loving letter, it has cheered me up a lot. You're a dear loving little wife & much too good for a dull, ugly red-headed fellow like me!!

Fancy the old squee (?) getting drunk. Madras squees are given that way, poor old man, he's been very good up to then. I don't think you were wise to leave the silver things in the house. Mrs Goodwyn must have been shirty because I didn't leave p.p.c cards on her. I hope you had enough money for the journey. Try not to spend more money than you can help on trifles, but get yourself a nice day dress long in front to hide your condition a bit; it will do when you get back to **Bangalore** as there won't be any dress maker in Naini Tal. If I were you I wouldn't join the Mothers' League till your 10 years older. I know you can't say no! to anybody, but put it off. I will arrange for one man to go down from the office on your return if I can. I've had about enough of this hotel. Ida! I'll tell you a little Christmas present I'd like you to give me and that is some more of those books from the stores. Another thing I want you to do; is to telegraph to me, deferred on Nov. 8 full news of yourself & baby; as after that I shall be marching steadily away & won't get an answer for ages. We leave **Taungyi**, our last post & telegraph office on Nov. 10. I paid another visit to the dentist this morning. He finishes me on Monday; this is all one tooth so I hope he won't charge me more than 16/-. How sweet it is to have a dear little wife, like you, my darling; but how I wish we could always be together.

28th October: Dear sweetheart, I went up to the Gymkhana yesterday evening; met Walker there & Couchman. They asked me to dine at their house. When I got home whom should I find tied to the bed but master Jumbo, looking very sad till he recognised me. I left him at the General's house & his orderly found but didn't know who he belonged to. I haven't made out the whole story; anyhow I'm delighted at getting him back; but he's not very demonstrative. I like my old Vicky she was always pleased to be talked to, but Jumbo cries and wants to be let alone.

How often I think of you, sweetie, this morning, as usual I woke very early & had a good long think. I wish you weren't such a hog in the mornings, Ida. I used to long so to wake you up & you were so cross. Tell me all about your troubles, your sickness will soon be over now². Oh! how I long for you, my pet. Your bangle is still safe on my arm but it will scratch you when you lie on my arm. I should like a midday sleep very much, only its too noisy. Capt. Walker is a very good little chap; I think I shall like him. He left his wife at **Meerut**, ill; but nobody feels their separation so much as we do. My forehead is rather spotty. By the bye Col. Henderson's successor is to be a Mr. Lee Warner from Bombay, I don't know anything about him. Did I tell you Capt. Birdwood died at **Umbella**, abscess of the liver; isn't it sad for her. I hope she hadn't another baby coming. He never looked healthy, did he? My writing & dressing table (?) one & I've got a tremendous big glass just in front of me. I do not look beautiful. I'm keeping my accounts so beautifully; I hope you are, don't forget to put down what you receive as well as what you spend. I amuse myself making estimates. Ida, I should be awfully pleased if you could make

² She was expecting Enid who was born 15th May 1895.

that 990/- I sent your Father last you while in **Naini Tal** & bring you down to **Bangalore** again, but I'm afraid it won't, as far as I can see. I shall not have to pay for any of my mules and shall get full travelling allowance as well. You understand, don't you dearest, that it is very important for us to save this year, don't you. If we haven't saved enough I shan't be able to go home at all & you will have to wait till November; but we both ought to go home together, it would be much jollier.

29th October: I've just been repacking my boxes, and now I'm waiting for breakfast. I go off this evening at 1/4 to 6 I'm longing for another letter from you telling me all about your journey. I do so hope you were not too tired, and baby too.

2 o'clock: I finished off the dentist, now I must pack up & send this off. You are always in my thoughts. I do so adore you, you darling; thank God for giving (*me*) such a good loving little wife; there's no one in the whole world equal to you; God bless & protect you from every ill. We must console ourselves by looking forward to our happy meeting. There won't be any need this year of my stopping a single day at Fort Stedman or anywhere on my way back to you. Keep up your spirits, little one & take as much exercise as you can without tiring yourself. Now goodbye. Ah! my darling, how I do love you, ever your own devoted Charlie.

31st October 1894, Meiktila Road: My darling little wife, I arrived here yesterday. Left **Rangoon** at 6. My companion a river steamer captain was more or less drunk. Next day he had 'chota hazri' off 5 cups of tea & breakfast 2 bottles of beer. I got here about midday; found Caulfield, Lloyd & Lowry, the last commissariat officer who is seeing to our rations. Both the two former seem pleasant. Lloyd is a remarkable man, besides getting the VC he never wears a topi. We all had dinner last night at the refreshment & they've gone off today with the 130 Gurkhas of the escort & a whole heap of mules; woke me up about 4 with the row they made starting. It's quite cold at night here; Jumbo is allowed to sleep on my bed, on the strict understanding that this is only a camp arrangement & he's not to presume in Bangalore; he says he's afraid of your smacks & won't.

1 o'clock: Walker & Warry have just arrived in the bungalow. I went down to the station to meet them. They go off tomorrow. I've got to wait till about the 3rd for Col. Woodthorpe. Our ponies have arrived. Fancy my camp bed & Ainslie's chair are missing. I only hope the ³babu has them with him at **Rangoon**. It's beastly hot here in the daytime, but quite cold at night. You dear sweet darling; how I wish you were here or I was with you. I never feel happy away from you.

1st November: I'm feeling a first class worm. Last night the rain came down in torrents, with the result that I got a throat, with pain in chest & had all the signs of fever coming on. However I took a good dose of quinine & have been in bed the last 4 hours; now I feel a bit better and have got up. Walker & Warry went off in the afternoon; now I'm alone again & have to wait for Col. Woodthorpe. I wish you were here then I wouldn't mind. I read a very good book today, Walker lent it me "Under the red robe." I wonder when I shall get a letter from you, I do hope soon. I'm not in a writing humour; that boy is not a good cook, so I shall not be sorry when I can dine with Col. W.

2nd November: Feeling better thank you but haven't ate much. Col. Woodthorpe comes tomorrow & we start the same afternoon, that is if our mules have come, but I've just had a wire from Lowry of the Commissariat saying he wants me to meet his train at 11.30 to talk over some telegrams about the mules; which looks as if there's some hitch. I hope to goodness not. I've had quite enough of this place. My watch has quite gone to the bad. I dropped it on the floor & next day it gained about 3 hours, now it won't go at all. I'm so often wondering what you are doing this very minute.

Now goodbye, my pet, God bless you. Fondest love; oh how I would love to kiss you & baby. Ever your own devoted Charlie.

2nd November, Meiktila road (*Latitude 20.866, Longitude 95.843 E*): My darling little wife, I sent you off a very poor kind of letter, just now. I was just sitting down to have a good write when Lowry turned up with the news that the Panthay mules wouldn't arrive till the 7th.; we may wait for them or go up with 60 mules that are here, leaving other things to come up later. It's a beastly nuisance. I shall get a dak (*post*) tomorrow with perhaps a letter from you. I want cheering up; I'm going to have some soup soon,

³ In British India, *babu* often referred to a native Indian clerk.

and mean to enjoy it. I must say I think you're awfully plucky to go through those months of sickness. I feel very sorry for myself after one day. I thought of you when I was sick on the steamer; and your only reward is to know that I love you more than ever. A stranger has just turned up in the bungalow, I don't know who he is. My ink is very bad. How I do wish I was with you, I hope you'll soon come to an end of your sickness, but I should so like to comfort you, you darling. Do you think baby will talk when I come back. I do hope so.

6 o'clock: To my great delight the mules arrived this afternoon, so we shall start tomorrow all right. I'm so glad, all tomorrow morning I shall be packing, so shall not have any time for writing. I got this afternoon two mails from home; my Mother (*Julia*) says she is also writing to you, so I won't send them on; also a long letter from **Blanchie**, which I send you on. Only 16 days since I left you, what a time it seems, still its something got over. I'm still feeling shaky, I expect I shall be quite fit again tomorrow; worse luck it looks like rain again. You dear sweetheart I'm miserable without you, I can't bear to be separated. When we're together, do kiss me more often. I judge of your love by the number of good kisses you give me!

3rd November: Just time to finish this off, darling; feeling much better, we start this afternoon. My fondest love, you dear, God bless you. Heaps heaps of kisses to yourself & baby. Ever your own devoted husband, Charlie.

5th November, **Pingaung** (?) Bungalow: My darling little wifie, Here we are on our journey. Col. Woodthorpe reached **Meiktila Road** on the 3rd but we couldn't leave till the next day, and then only had a short march, 8 miles, to **Hlaingdet** (*Lat. 20.807, Long. 96.179*); however there was a break in the road at which all the mules had to be unloaded, the things carried across & then reloaded, so it was 12 o'clock before we got in. Today we were up at 4.30 & off at 5.45, reached **Yemebin** at 9, had breakfast there & then came on here, 22 miles in all and I'm a bit tired. Both our ponies go very well but pull so frightfully. When they want to they bolt a good deal, still I like mine. I'm feeling very well and think of you. Col. Woodthorpe is very kind, but you know how when he chooses he won't talk and it's drag finally I drop off into silence. He feed me & is going to make out my ½ share afterwards. I had some oranges yesterday. They reminded me of you; how I wish I could have peeled one for you. It's ages since I heard from you, won't I enjoy it when I do. We do double marches every day. Capt. Lowry has just come in, but is going on again to **Nampaudet**. I do so love you my darling. God bless you. Goodnight.

Wetpuyet. This morning the Panthay mule drivers (Chinese they are) gave a lot of trouble objecting to such long marches, so we didn't get off till 8 o'clock. Col. W. had a sore knee, so we couldn't canter our ponies. We had breakfast at **Nampaudet** & then came on here. All well so far. We have come up hill a lot & are now about 3,000 feet up & quite cold; we both took quinine. Col. W. is much more talkative now. He said he was feeling seedy yesterday. Tomorrow we reach **Thamakan** where I shall post this & send you a wire. Darling, I miss you worse & worse. Now I'll tell you two bits of good news. First, Col. Woodthorpe thinks we are almost certain to be back at **Taungyi** by the middle of April and as there will be nothing to delay me I may be back by the end of April or at latest the very beginning of May; that is jolly isn't it. The second is that Govt. pays all our mules, so I shall spend nothing but the messing which will come to about 80/- a month. By the bye I picked up a young Sikh to act as a squee &c. I give him 10/- a month & he is very useful in many ways. I've instructed our babu to send on Jan 1 when he receives my 2nd 3 months pay the whole of it to Bangalore, so about Jan 15 there will be about 3,000 sent there. This will make you all comfortable about money. Live as cheaply as you can. But Ida, you must go in for ice this year. You darling, I don't want you to stint yourself. I'm feeling very well, my cold nearly gone. We reach **Taungyi** on the 9th and leave probably on the 11th or 12th. Col. W. & I have made out that marching hard we shall reach **Hongluk** where we begin work about Dec 2, 10 days before we are expected. We shall go the same way I went last year I think via **Kengkhan** and **Monghsat**. All this fast marching makes me feel cheerful because I feel it increases the chances of my getting back to you quickly. The mule men are making a most fiendish row calling in their mules from the jungle. I'm sorry to say my pony has a sore back, so I shall have to walk a good part of tomorrow's march. You won't forget to tell me how much money is left in the Madras Bank, will you, dearest. I think I may send some money over before Jan 1 if I can 500/- or so, as we are running our

account rather low there. Bye the bye Ida, if you want money urgently at any time remember the Alliance Bank have your 500/- invested & Grindley Groome & Co 1,000/- invested. You can tell them to sell out if you want it, but don't unless absolutely necessary. Jumbo follows us very well. I shall have a little blanket coat made for him.

7th November, Thamakan, This was the place I heard of poor Bob's death last year, and now Col. Woodthorpe has had a telegram from Longe saying Macaulay has been killed on the Waziristan Expedition. You remember him at Simla, tall with his arm in a sling. Poor chap I like him & I'm very sorry at his death. He was in the same batch as I was & had just come into the Survey junior to me.

We did our usual double march today & found Lowry here & Eyre the civilian is coming to dinner too. In a couple of days I shall have news of you, my darling. I am so longing to have a telegram & a letter. It's quite cold up here 4,500 ft up & I wear my sweater & get under a lot of blankets. My health very is good thank you. Dearest, how awfully I do love you. You can't imagine it. I'm always thinking of you, & have begun to imagine our meeting already. My train will be the same morning one & I shall find you as usual looking prettier than ever; though you will be thinking you're looking ugly I know. Col. W. quite spoils Jumbo, so he gets lots to eat. You dear pretty darling, I long to be with you & "have you in my arms" again. Don't you wonder why I put that in inverted commas? I've just finished a letter to my mother. God bless you my sweet pet. I will write to you again before I leave **Taungyi** & after that goodness knows, but I will send in a telegram with my letter, so when you get a telegram you will get a letter about 12 days afterwards. Goodbye sweetheart. Fondest love & kisses to you & our little one. Take great care of your dear self. Ever your devoted husband, Charlie.

9th November, Taungyi⁴ (*Latitude 20.783 N, Longitude 97.035 E*): My dearest little wifie, I'm awfully busy, fancy of our 100 mules 50 are useless from sore backs, so we've had to cut down right & left, rearrange loads. We are due to leave on the 12th, but I doubt it. I got your wire of the 8th this morning; you dear heart, you must after this act as you think best in everything. I shall be too far away to settle anything. I imagine now you will stay in **Naini Tal**, though I don't know whether your father is staying. You had better write to Ainslie, ask him to tell Mr Darling we give up the house; then he can dismiss the servants, sell the garden for 200/- or by auction, sell piano putting your own price on it, say 400/- asking Mrs Goodwyn or Miss Sutherland first, sell Simbu for 300/- & the trap for 350/-. Ask Mrs Woodham to sell Arabi; the smaller things he can take over to his house & they can be sold when I get down to **Bangalore**. Your staying in **Naini Tal** will mean my getting leave to go there & may prevent my going home, but I'm feeling very well, so that doesn't matter, but you can go home. Tell Mr Ainslie exactly what you want him to do & thank him!

It's very jolly up here; it was a short march. I'm so busy, dearest I can't think about your plans very clearly. I will now send some money to father's account to help you to go on with. You never telegraph me enough news. Are you going to stay with father or what? I do so love you my pet & hope you will have everything comfy. I would sooner be with you when you had the baby than go home, so don't bother about that. By the bye if you can remember the things you might make out a list with the prices of the larger things, tables, chairs, beds &c & send to Mr Ainslie to circulate, but act in everything as you think best. You have got plenty of common sense, when you use your own judgement and not someone else's. I haven't quite arranged about that money yet, but will before I leave. Oh! I would love to be with you & save you all the trouble of these arrangements; but you do everything very well. God bless you my darling, I'm always thinking of you.

We start in two parties, Caulfield, Lloyd & Warry in one going via **Keng Tung** and Col. W., Walker & myself going via **Monghsat**. I see a lot of new mules just trooping in, 20 I think, we should get off all right.

⁴ During British occupation, the town became the chief city and capital of the Southern Shan States. **Taungyi's** modern development began in 1894, when the British moved their administrative offices from **Maing Thauk (Fort Stedman)** some 10 miles to the south on the eastern shores of Inle Lake to the higher elevation of Taunggyi, for health and geographical reasons.

Now goodbye, my darling, take care of your dear sweet self; fondest love & kisses to you & baby, ever your own devoted husband, Charlie.

11th November, Taungyi: My darling little wifie, Alas! No letter from you yet. I cant think what has become of them, my newspapers arrive all right, and we start tomorrow so I shan't get any letter from you for more than a month. We are to ave a dak sent every 10 days, I believe, but Daly of the 4th Burma is going 2 or 3 days with us& then going to **Moné** so I shall send my first letter by him. Then we meet Leverson at **Kengkham** & will get him to send off a second letter, so that you will get some letters, but more me won't get any, and I'm so anxious to know why you've thought of staying up in **Naini Tal**. I only hope it won't be with Mrs Cadge. I'm in brilliant health. It's very hard lines (*sic*) not having any letters from you before I start. You're so uncertain about posting your letters thogh your very good about writing. Don't forget to pay for everything Ida, just as if you were staying with anyone else. It's very cold here at night. I'm having a coat made for Jumbo. Now to wash & dress.

Evening: I'm going over to dine with Mr Hildebrand the DC and have got everything ready to start tomorrow. Now I can have a little quiet talk with you. My sweetheart, I think of you continually & do so long for a letter. You must write to me full details of what your plans are; but you must settle everything yourself, it won't be any use referring to me as my answer would take too long in coming. Jumbo is having his coat put on, it's not very beautiful. Ask Ainslie to take care of Vic (?) & we will may him the cost; but if anyone wants a dog ask him to give Vic away, as I shall be so short a time in **Bangalore**. Until I hear fully from you I can't think out my plans about my leave &c. Don't forget to leave enough money in the bank at Bangalore to pay for my insurance, say 36/- a month; be very careful about this dearest. Daly of the 4th Burma is going a few marches out with us. I've got all my things onto 8 mules, so I'm travelling pretty light aren't I! Walker seems a very nice chap indeed, and we shall be a very jolly party. But oh! My darling, it's your dear self I want. You don't know how much I miss you at every turn. My love for you grows more & more sweetheart. I'm sending Father a money order for 500/- to help you on, but I cant send any more money till January when I hope to be able to send 3000/- now as I don't know your plans for certain. I want you to write a note like this: Baboo Chandoo Mean, Please send the money Lieut Ryder has instructed you about as follows - & then put what you want. If you are going down to Bangalore then tell him to send it to Bangalore. If you are going to stay in **Naini Tal** have most of it sent to you, only see that we have a clear 500/- or so at Bangalore. Address your letter as above to **Taungyi**. Tell him to send it by M. O. If after taking what money you want & still leaving 500/- at Bangalore there is anything over tell him to send it to Grindlay Groome & Co to my account. It will do to pay for our tickets.

Nov. 12. Goodbye, God bless you, fondest love & kisses to you both, ever your devoted lover, Charlie.

12th November, Hopong (*Latitude 20.783 N, Longitude 97.183 E*): My sweet darling, Here we are at the end of one march. We had breakfast with Hildebrand having sent our things off about 10 o'clock. We didn't start ourselves till 2.30, got in here about 5.30 a 10 mile march, down hill, path good but marshy in places. My heel is still bad & I can't wear a boot yet. We are all four, i.e. Col W., Walker, Daly & myself in a good ziait with an iron roof, which I'm glad of as it's raining now. It's just dinner time so I can't write more.

13th November: This morning we went down to a small tank after duck. I shot one, Daly knocked over 5 but couldn't get any of them, Col. W. hit none. So after all mine was the only one. We came about 12 miles to **Sa-un** (?). Got in about 12 & had breakfast at 1. I spent the afternoon reading, then went for a stroll & now have just had my first lesson in **Shan**. I mean to go on with it regularly. Unfortunately none of the Shans in camp can write Shan, so I can't go up for any exam in it, but it will pass the time learning to talk. Not being by myself this year I haven't the time to write to you as much as last year, but I love you more than ever darling. It will be ages before I get a letter from you, my pet. Don't you pity me. It rained last night, but now it's a lovely moonlight evening. I wonder if you're thinking of me. My foot is better, but my pony has a sore back. Isn't it a nuisance. However, I shan't want to do much riding after this. We shall reach **Hongluk** where we commence work about Dec. 3. Now it's dinner time, so goodnight & God bless you my darling.

15th November, Bamping: Yesterday we marched 11 miles to **Mongpawm**. There was a pwé on, native acting & dancing, very slow, but we all went to see it & couldn't get away, so I had no time too write to you. Now today we came 10 miles into this place. I've walked all the way the last two marches as my pony's back is not well, but this does not improve my heel. Daly leaves us tomorrow to go to **Moné**, so he is taking all our letters to post. I don't feel very able to write without any letters from you. There is a weekly dak runs to **Keng Ting** and as it only goes about the same pace we do, it won't catch us up till we get to **Mongsing** about Christmas, an awful long time to wait. I will give my next letter to Leverson at **Keng Kham** to send in. It will be about a fortnight after this. Poor little darling, how are you? I hope the sickness is going off. Don't forget to tell me all yours & father's plans.⁵ Until I hear I can't think out about my leave & remember it will take nearly 2 months to reach me, so settle everything as soon as possible. I've just written to my mother. Give my love to father & tell him how anxious I am to know his plans. Do you think mother will come out again? I feel my letters are very short, darling, but you can understand my difficulties in finding time to write. I do so adore you, my darling. You dear little sweetheart how I long for a letter from you.

After dinner: We shall play whist when I truly would be much sooner writing to you. It's nearly a month since I left you. I do so miss you, Ida. I think in making out your plans, you may count on my getting over to you by May 3. If I decide on taking my 3 month's leave in **Naini Tal**, I won't be in so great a hurry, so as to be able to take you down as far as Bombay & then go on to Bangalore. I must know what your ideas are first though. I could get 10 days or so with you, without taking leave, but then I might have to leave just before Baby came. It's altogether a very difficult thing to think out. Now goodnight my pet. Pray for me & love me ever so. God bless you. Tell me all about yourself & baby. My fondest love & kisses to you both,. Ever your own devoted husband & lover, Charlie.

I think of all day & love you more than ever.

16th November: Palep: My own little wifie, We came a double march today, 18 miles, but the path was good. Just after leaving **Bamping** we came in two small jreels (?), I wounded a duck which we lost in the reeds, & both Daly & Col. W. missed. Then I got another shot & got a good fat duck. We breakfasted half way & Daly left us there. Here we've pitched tents for the first time. I like it, as it's more private & I can write to you more darling. Tomorrow is a long march too. My old heel won't get well. Col. W. shot a snipe close to the camp. Ida, don't you think it would be best, if you have decided to stay in **Naini Tal** to send Ainslie a list of as much of our furniture as you can think of, with prices, & ask him to circulate it. It might save me having to go to **Bangalore** & I could go straight from **Rangoon** to you via **Calcutta**. I will send you a list of as many things as I can think of. Small things can be sent to auction; but darling I leave all arrangements to you. I hope you will stay in Naini and the climate will do you & baby all the good in the world. Take care & keep her warm but don't bottle (?) her up too much. I'm feeling so very well, that I can easily postpone my trip home a year, but I want you to go home, sweetheart. Jumbo is very well & sends his love to Baby & Jane. Don't forget to dismiss all the Banglore servants & give them chits, cook boy & tandi (?) katch if you can get her a place. Mahli (?) & wall (?) also as soon as the garden is sold. If no one will buy the flowers, ask Mr Ainslie to sell them by auction. We are giving him a great deal of trouble, so thank him very much & write prettily as you can. Well goodnight, you little darling. I long to have you in my arms, don't blush!!

17th November: We came a good 20 miles today, breakfasting half way under a tree. I walked all but four miles in tennis shoes. We are on the bank of the **Nam Teng** about 100 yards broad. Last year there was a bamboo bridge across, but now it's been washed away & all the loads have to be crossed on a single raft. All the animals swim across. Caulfield & Lloyd with their sepoy's are on the other bank & their things have not all yet crossed, so we shall make a late start tomorrow. We've about 15 mile to go. I'm feeling as well as possible. I do hope you are keeping well & as cheerful as possible. I will be with you when baby is born, I promise you that. I shall have no time to write after dinner, so much do as much as I can today.

⁵ Her father Edward Evans Grigg was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Indian Army and Assistant Commissioner at Oudh.

19th November: I couldn't write yesterday. We had a very tiring day; getting up at 6. It took us 3½ hours getting all our things across the river. We then did a 15 mile march, having breakfast half way under a tree, passed Loyd & Caulfield about 3 miles short of our camp & got in finally about 4; had tea & then I had a sleep & went to bed soon after dinner. Do you remember how angry you used to get with me for being sleepy before dinner? Today we did 17 miles & got in about 3 o'clock; found Levenson, the Asst. Commr. from **Moné** here, Boxall, an orchid collector & Warry. We halt tomorrow, every one wants a rest as our last 4 marches have been 19, 21, 16 & 17 miles each. I've been thinking a lot about our plans & am going to write them all out. I think everything will come out all right. Now read this carefully about you; you stay in **Naini Tal** till about August when you go home. I of course don't know when father intends going home, but I suppose if he does you could take on his house, paying the rent. Now for myself; I've several alternatives. You remember I had about 3 weeks in Bangalore before office opened. Well I could take that time with you, go back to Bangalore & then get 3 months leave, meet you in **Bombay** & go home with you. Or I could take my 3 months leave from **Rangoon**, and stay with you in **Naini Tal**, & go down to **Bangalore** seeing you off at **Bombay** on my way. At present I rather incline to the latter plan; but let me know what you think. At any rate give up the house & sell as many things & dismiss servants as fast as you can & also let me know father's plans. You know how long it takes for me to get a letter from you, and until I hear I can't apply for leave. You dear sweetheart, I do so love you & long to be with you. You will have a lot to think about & arrange; but you do everything like that capitally & I'm quite confident you will do the best thing. Everybody agrees we shall be back earlier than usual, but if we settle for taking my 3 months to Naini, I won't be in any hurry, as the later I go over, the later I shall be able to stay with you. So one point you might think over is when you would be going home, not forgetting May 25. You poor darling you have many troubles for so little a girl, but you're a brave darling & love carries one through a great deal. I miss you more & more every day. I long for a time when we can be several years together without a separation. God bless you my darling pet. Goodnight.

20th November: I enjoyed a lazy morning, though I woke at 6.30. Now I'm going to spend the day writing. First of all about money. Oct, Nov & Dec pay I've drawn & spent. i.e. I mean sent 500/- over to father & the rest I got in **Bangalore**. I've told our babu that you will write & tell him what to do with Jan, Feb & March's pay; this he will draw on Feb 1. I imagine by that time you will have received a good deal from the sale of our things. What I want you to remember is always to have enough at Bangalore to pay the 36/- on 23rd of each month for the insurance, then to have enough in Naini for yourself, and send all you don't want to Grindlay, Groome & Co. Bombay. I don't want anything more for myself. I've sent father altogether for you 990/- & 500/-, total 1490/-. Keep that account very clear. Ida, every now & then send me a telegram, but address it to Mekong Mission, **Moné**, that is the last telegraph office & all our letters go through there. Dear old pet, if you had only agreed to stay in Naini when I proposed it in Bangalore, we could have saved a lot of bother & some money. I shall send off my next letter from **Hongluk** or **Mong Lim**, only in about a fortnight from now, but it will be into January before you get (*it*). If I send my telegrams from **Moné**, you may expect a letter 19 days after the telegram, if from **Taungyi** 12 days. I hope you will be all right about money darling. I can't think of any better arrangement to make. I spend nothing here except the messing. Now I must write to my mother, Ainslie & Wiffs (*his brother Wilfred*).

6 o'clock: I've had no time to write to Ainslie, but I shouldn't do any good by writing as I'm not certain of your plans. In my list I've probably forgotten a lot of things. Can you remember how the things were packed up enough to be able to say what boxes you want to take home with you? Of course that can wait till we are together. We were out dynamiting for fish just now but without success. Before that Levenson, Lloyd, Walker & I played whist and I ended quits. Bless you my darling & the best wife any man ever had. Goodbye, my pet, fondest love & kisses to you both; love to father, ever your devoted lover, Charlie.

24th November, Mongpu: My own sweet wife, I sent you my last letter from **Keng Kham** on the 20th. We left the next day, marching 7 miles down to the **Salween**. Our things took a long time to cross the river & all the mules had to be crossed 5 at a time on a raft. About 40 crossed on the 22nd & we waited to see them across, not leaving till 10 o'clock, so that it was near 2 when we got breakfast at our next

camp, **Pangwan**, 10 miles off. The path all along here is very narrow just room for one animal. Yesterday we did 12 miles to **Saling** & in the afternoon I caught a lot of butterflies. Today we only came 5½ miles here, and have been having a lazy day. Col. W. got out his electric battery & gave everyone shocks, also his musical box. We've just been for a short stroll round the village after taking the time from the sun. My foot is all but well & I wore boots today for the first time for about 10 days. I'm feeling very well. Col. W. had a go of fever yesterday. Your dear photo is always put on my table. Old Boxall the orchid collector came into my tent to talk at **Keng Kham** & said looking at your photo, "Is that the star that guides you on." I said, "Yes." He said, "And a very good looking one too." Mosquitoes are biting my feet like anything. I shall have my net up tonight. I've got a whole lot of butterflies for Longe, 120 already; I hope some of them are new. You darling heart, how I do love you; I'm always thinking of you. The more I think of it the more I approve of your plan of staying in **Naini Tal** & unless I change my mind I will take 3 months leave & have a lovely time with you, nursing & loving you. I sometimes think I wish I had gone on this **Waziristan** Expedition, as they will get the medal, but should have been in Macaulay's place, poor fellow & I think of you, darling & thank God. My sweet darling there's no one in the world like you. Yesterday was our engagement day. I wonder whether you thought of me. I do so long for your dear letters; it's dreadful being so far away. Now goodnight sweetheart.

25th November: 11 mile march to **Hing King**, a most annoying march as we were continually crossing a stream about 15 yards wide. We are encamped near the village & I enjoyed a good sleep this afternoon, as the Phoongyis⁶ disturbed us by their beastly singing. We dynamited the stream & got a few fish, enough for breakfast & dinner. Those little black & white flies are on the job again. Jumbo has just stolen a piece of cake of Walker's. He asked me not to whack him & as he said heaped coals of fire on his head by giving him another piece. Still keeping very well. We have 6 or 7 men always down with fever, My dear little darling I'm looking forward so to our meeting though it's a dreary long time off. This will be late for your Christmas, sweetheart, may every happiness & joy be yours, my pet; and our wedding day (*27th December*) you won't forget that. We shall spend Christmas at **Mong Sing** I fancy, probably 7 of us, a much better Christmas than last year, but it's you I want to be with, my pet. I dozed off this afternoon thinking of our love for each other & of our meeting. I want if possible to arrive at **Naini Tal** about May 15; that will make baby No 2 2½ months old when I have to go back to Bangalore & that will be old enough to travel. I think my boy has got over his fever all right. I long for news of you, my pet, won't I enjoy my next letter. Are you thinking of me & longing for me as much as I am for you? Offer to share expenses with father, if you think best & let me know each month how much is in the bank at Bangalore; how much you have & how much father has of yours, will you, dearest? Also I want to know how much the Alliance Bank Simla have. Will you send 24/- to the Pioneer in payment of subscription for Pioneer Mail sent to my mother. Now I'm going to read a bit, so goodnight, my pet. I wonder if baby will talk before I come back; she must be walking now like anything. God bless you my darling pet; I do so love you & oh! my darling kiss me more than you did this summer!

26th November: I'm pretty well tired, after a 16 mile march up & down hill. We came in here about 3.30, breakfasting halfway. Last year we did this two marches. The camp is on the **Nam Sin River** which is about 80 yards across. Some of the things have crossed this evening. We go into **Monghsat** in 3 marches. Last year I did it in 5; so you can see we go along pretty fast. I walked the whole 16 miles today, giving up my pony to a sick khalasi⁷, and I don't suppose I shall use him much again for some days. I am feeling as well as ever; but have taken 6 grains of quinine, as I am so tired. I think all day of you, my darling & wonder what you are doing. Read my letters carefully & answer my questions, won't you. Such a lot depends on my knowing exactly what your plans are. I can't think of anything more to ask you, but tell me everything you can think of. You see, I won't get an answer to this till February, and then I've got to apply for leave, which all takes time. I separate from Col. Woodthorpe about the 4th Dec. a march short of **Hongluk** to go up a hill, while he goes up another, beyond Hongluk, but I shall only be weak by myself. Jumbo is very fit, a bit thin. He sleeps on my bed as soon as we get into

6 Burmese Buddhist monks.

7 Hindi word meaning a manual worker, especially a docker, porter, or sailor.

camp. When I go to bed I make him up a bed in the corner of my tent, but he often cries to be let up onto my bed & I never say no! I'm reading Lucretia & feel tired, so goodnight sweetheart.

30th November, Monghsat (*Latitude 20.533 N, Longitude 99.25 E*): I've got time for writing today as we have halted. On the 27th we crossed the **Nam Sim** river, seeing all our things across first & then march(ed) 9½ miles up & down hill to **Napokhien**, a small village there was a good ziait (*or zayat*) in which we lived. On the 28th we did 11½ miles over a very bad path to **Mékaw**, a ziait in the jungle. Then yesterday we did 19 miles in here; after which I think we deserved a halt & I slept till 7, when Jumbo woke me by crying. I've been having a lazy day, reading, arranging my butterflies. Then I got a plane table ready for a sub-surveyor & worked out the time from the sun. I've had my hair cut, so has Walker, by a khalasi; shaved would be a more correct word, as we are really almost bald; but it's cool & comfortable & will be respectable in a few days. I longed for you, my pet, to cut it. I dreamt last night baby No. 2 was born a boy! How I do long for you sweetheart. I prefer pitching our tent to sleeping in a ziait; I can write more. In a ziait we are all close together & talking most of the time. I'm always thinking of you, sweetheart, and long to be with you. God bless you, goodnight.

1st December: A new month. It makes me feel our meeting a bit nearer, darling. This morning after 1½ miles we had to cross a river 80 yards wide. There were two good rafts so we didn't wait to see our mules cross, but went ahead. The path was narrow, through thick jungle, but pretty level. At 9 miles we came on our breakfast, the coolies had halted in the wrong place, so we had breakfast & then came two miles on here; a camp in the jungle with a stream, which we just dynamited, but got nothing. I arranged the days bag of butterflies, 34, total 244. Our things got in about 3, being delayed by having to cross the river. Tomorrow we've got a long pull up hill & then down again. Oh! dear how I long for a letter from you my pet. It would help me to write too. I've got nothing to answer. I love you, sweetheart more than ever, and miss you dreadfully. I shall send this on with Col. W. to **Hongluk**, on the chance of him sending a dak from there into **Keng Tung**. I hope the sickness will be all over by the time this reaches you. All your suffering makes me love you all the more. How I wish I was with you. No one comfort you as I can. How is little Ida? I'm glad she will have a (*sic*) cold weather in the hills. I won't be so afraid of the winter in England for her. Jumbo causes great astonishment among the villagers. They all crowd round him & call him the "coloured dog". I wonder so often what you are doing. I know from your telegram you're in camp. Do you ride or go in a dhady (?)? Don't forget to pay for your coolies &c. I'm so looking forward to 3 months leave with you sweetie. I'm cruel enough to be glad you can't go out, I shall have you all to myself, and won't I just love you. I'll hold your hand when the baby is born, if I may & sleep in your room; so I'll bring my camp bed & put it in a corner so you won't feel lonely. How happy we shall be together, won't we? I can't tell you how I look forward to our meeting. Now goodnight, my pet.

2nd December: We had a long 17 mile march; the first 7 miles up hill to close on 5,000 ft. & then down hill to a good valley, several villages. We didn't get breakfast till 3 o'clock. We're living in a fine brick Phoongyi Chaun. This evening while Col. W. was shewing his toys I took a photograph of some Kiim (?) women watching him, but it was a dull evening, so I'm afraid it won't come out. I'm very tired & not up to much writing. I've got 2 days more march before I leave the road for my hill. Caught 14 butterflies today, total 258. I shall have a huge lot for Longe when I get back. We meet Warry at **Hongluk** about the 12th. I have hopes he may bring down letters with him as comes via **Keng Tung**. I do so long to hear news of you. Col. Woodthorpe has had out his musical box & his electric battery. Now goodnight & God bless you sweetheart.

I'm going on writing again. You understand sweetie about selling the things, don't you? Sell all the large things by list, say anything over 10/- & the rest by auction. The important thing is to give over the house & sell the garden as that will save mahli & water & the boy can be dismissed. I want if possible not to have to go to **Bangalore** to get any things. If I take my leave from **Rangoon**, I save the long hot journey & also keep my 100/- a month Burma allowance, while on leave; which will give 300/- extra in the 3 months. But by the time this reaches you, I hope you will have done all that; so it's not much good writing all this. After we are all collected at **Mong Sing** I fancy our daks will come & go pretty regularly which will be a comfort, because I know I miss your letters dreadfully & you will mine too! I mean you to have about 3 years at home if possible. Won't we have a happy time together.

4th December: Yesterday we had a tiring day, not a long march, only 11 miles, but about half way we came on a small river too deep for the mules to wade, so they all had to be unloaded & the things carried across & then loaded up again. So we didn't get breakfast till 2. Then we went & dynamited some fish & after (*si*) I was too tired to write. Today we came some 14 miles and are encamped in the jungle. I've been separating out my things as I go to my hill tomorrow for about 4 days. My main camp goes into **Hongluk**. I go up light with 10 coolies, a small tent I shall write lots to you then being by myself. I'm quite looking forward to it. As I was riding through thick jungle today I got a nasty scratch just above my right eye. It bled like anything but it's all right now. I'm feeling awfully well. Last year I had a go of fever at **Fort Stedman**, but this year I got through the terav (?) without any fever. I believe this is chiefly owing to my getting better food. I should be awfully pleased if I got back to you without any fever at all, but I hardly expect it. I shall have a longish march tomorrow, as I want to get to a **Mukso** village & then up to my hill next day & I hope to camp on the hill top if possible. It has been cloudy the last 2 or 3 days, but I hope it will be clear when I want to observe. Now goodnight sweetheart.

6th December: Yesterday I left the others, marching 11 miles. They went on 7 miles to **Hongluk**. My coolies didn't reach me till 3, so I couldn't go any further. Today I came on up towards my hill, first 5 miles to a **Mukso** village, then 4 more to another & 3 more to this place, a little **Talon** village, a sort of Chinese, only 3 huts; height 4,000 ft so it's quite cold. My hill is straight up above me, very steep, so it will be a tiring climb. I shall take my camp up and put it on the hill top if I can. This is a very short letter for so many days sweetheart. I feel rebellious, at being away from you. We two who are so fond of each other to be separated like this, when other people live all their lives together & wouldn't mind if they were separated. Walker has lent me "Little Dorrit", which I've never read before, it's a fine long book, so will last me ever so long. I expect Col. W. is up on his hill today, it's a much easier one to go up. I've only got rations for the men till the 8th as I expected to be able to get rice from these villages, but they have none; so if I have to stay up I shall be rather up a tree. I shall enjoy your letters when I get them more than I've ever done before. I do so miss you sweetie, I adore you simply awfully. I hope to find a shorter way into **Hongluk** than the way I've come; this is a very round about way. The **Talon** women are quite pretty, very different from the **Shans** & **Muksos**. Passing through one of their villages today, everyone came out to see me, the ladies with only a skirt on each; one very far gone in the family way, but not at all shy. It's wonderful how these women & all savages have such an easy time without doctors or any comforts. Their wedding ceremony consists of the couple eating rice together. If a man goes off with another man's wife he has to pay the husband 120/-, but it doesn't often happen, as a wife can be got for 14/-. Cheap isn't it? If a man doesn't like his wife or she can't have children, he can send her back to her parents, giving her 11/-. You are a good little wife & are safe from that fate. I'm so glad, Ida, that you do have babies, it makes me love you ever so much more & I feel quite proud myself! Give dear little Ida⁸ ever so many kisses & teach her to say Father before I come. God bless you, my darling, my thoughts are always with you.

7th December: Here I am on the top of my hill & jolly cold it is. 5,250 ft & a quite bare hill top, no trees. It took me 1½ hours to get up a very stiff climb, several awkward bits that I don't relish the idea of going down. I've been observing off & on all day. Col. W. flashed to me from his hill & I flashed back, but alas! no flashes from the two signallers whom we sent round by **Keng Tung** (*Lat. 21.291, Long. 99.608*), so I must wait here till I see them, then it will be one day's long march into **Hongluk**. I've sent my khasis coolies back to the village, as there is no water here. They carried up some for me. I've a large camp fire in front of my tent. It's a cold night. You & I could be very snug in our little bed. The Talons are a sort of Chinese, the women quite good looking; only one man in the little village with two wives, both with children. Up here on my lonely hill top I think of you more than ever, darling, what wouldn't I give to be with you. I hope you're having a happy time. Don't forget sweetie, when you're in the family way you're inclined to be a bit cross. You don't mind me telling you this, do you? So don't have any rows with father. Give him my love. God bless you, my sweet pet, I think of you all day. What a dear good little wife you are to me, my pet, now goodnight, sweet dreams. Is there any limit to your love?

8 Referring to **Margaret**.

8th December: I've had an uninteresting day, watching for the signals, but no signs of them. My men have only rations till tomorrow morning, so I've sent down two men to try & get rice from the villages below. I'm very cosy in my little tent. I've had it all covered with grass to keep the sun off in the day & the cold at night. I'm getting near the end of "Little Dorrit" so I hope to goodness I shan't have to stay up here much longer. I think I wrote the other day I should try & time my arrival to you, so as to be as long with you after the baby is born as possible. As a matter of fact, when it comes to the point I shall never mind about that, but hurry over to you as quickly as possible. As you may imagine I think there's no doubt I shall be with you early in May, less than 5 months now. How happy we shall be together, won't we? You must keep up your spirits darling. Remember how important it is for baby's future health. You may well be proud of our little one & I hope No.2 will be as successful. My camp fire is just being lit, 5 o'clock. Poor Jumbo doesn't like the cold; he's not a cheerful companion, Ida; more (*nor?*) is my boy; he's like your Firzie (?) speaks very low & is always sorry for himself, but he cooks much better now, ever so much better than that ruffian last year. It was cloudy this morning, I hope tomorrow it will be fine. I want to see the sunrise from this hill, it ought to be lovely. I shall be able to write heaps more, darling, when I hear from you, which ought to be in a few days. Now it's nearly two months since I left you, but it seems an age. How I do long for a time when we can settle down in some station & know we shall be together for some years. I suppose you are still camping in the hills, dearest; I wish I were with you. I think over our meeting, plan it our & all; just like last year. Oh! how excited I get, when the time comes near. I'm feeling as well as possible. Now, goodnight & God bless you, my own little wife.

After dinner: I'm getting into my old way of writing longer letters, then just as I'm getting regularly into it, I shall no longer be alone. What a comfort our letters have been to me since were engaged more than 3 years ago now. Two **Muksos** turned up with 5 fowls & some rice, so I'm all right now for food, but my boy has gone & got fever, not bad, but he is so very sorry for himself.

There's a fine moon. I saw the new moon the other day & wished for a boy. Do you feel as if it was one? All the same I wouldn't mind a girl, they are less of a bother than boys. How many more would you like to have? We're making good progress towards that 6 I used to talk of. Now my tent has been lashed up, it's a round one, very small & only a single fly, weighs 40 lbs, only one small pole in the middle. I'm afraid I shall not go on down to **Tonquin**, Col. Woodthorpe will probably & I shall have to do the dirty work of brining back the men & mules. However it would cost more going round to **Tonquin**, but I should like to see something of the French possessions; but I should be more certain of getting back quick to you if I came back this way. I feel more & more wrapped up in you. I don't feel as if I ever could be like a father preferring to stay out here than being with mother. As soon as I can get my pension of 700/- a year home we go, don't you think so. My great ambition is to be always with you; that's my idea of perfect happiness. I'm off to bed so goodnight my pretty one.

9th December: Much to my delight I saw one of my signals today & as the sub-surveyor shewing it was to take the other signaller to the other hill first, it's evident either that some hill is in the way or that the man has left, so I came down about 10 o'clock to the **Talon** village I camped at before. Now it's 5 o'clock; I've had my bath & tea & seen rice rations issued & having finished my book I can devote myself to you. It struck me today, Ida, that probably all baby's clothes are at Bangalore; I mean those suitable to the coming event. Now, you must think of all these things & if you can describe the box they are in, ask Ainslie to send it up & any other things you can think of. I want if possible to avoid going to **Bangalore** before going to **Naini Tal**. Any things you from there write for at once, so they may be up in plenty of time. Of course, if it can't be helped I will go by Bangalore, but it will take 6 days longer, give me a very hot journey & cost near 100/- more. Think of all the things in plenty of time. I hope we shall have saved quite as much as I estimated. If Father is going home in April you might sound him, as to whether he can leave plates &c & you could take them home with you. I haven't yet given up the idea quite of going home with you, but I don't think it will be the best plan. I want to manage to be as much with you as possible & it has to be thought out. You see I shan't be able to save much while you're in England, until I come over here again. I'm feeling awfully fit in every way; it's wonderful how entirely I've got rid of my diarrhoea. I wonder if **Naini Tal** will bring it on again. I was all right there before. I fancy we shall collect Strong in **Hongluk**. Warry & Lloyd will be there &

Scott & perhaps Mrs Scott, & I fancy Col. Woodthorpe will be struck with the same idea that I was & come down from his hill with Walker. I bought a pig for the men & they are all gorging themselves. I fancy some of them will be sick tomorrow. My boy is all right again, but last night he was keeping me & himself awake groaning, till I shut him up. Jumbo was left behind on the hill top. He crept under some long grass, quite hidden & went to sleep, however he ran down after us. My photoes (*sic*) won't be a success; I've only taken two & in taking out the last I let the light stream right into the camera, spoiling the outside film & perhaps all the others; I hope not. I must have something to shew Ainslie when I get back. When I'm alone I write to you as much in a day as I otherwise do in about a week. It's just 5 weeks now since I got your only letter, but you will have had to wait quite as long for this. After this you will get letters fairly regularly, once a fortnight. The **Talons** have no marriage ceremony at all. They just buy the girl they want from 15/- to 40/- each. You remember that book on the Chin hills Ainslie lent us with such good photoes; The man who wrote that, Dr Newland, has married a Chin woman. He paid 4,000/- for her, the daughter of a chief; this is a fact & the day she arrived some other chief who hadn't had his share of the money stole her & Newland to pay him 500/- more before he finally got her. One would think he was mad. I shall find you quite stout when we meet. I shall say the climate agrees with you, poor little darling. You must comfort yourself with the thought of how many thousands of times more I love you for it. My precious pet, now you have won my heart & kept it with all your sweetness. You are such a swell little darling & I adore you. I feel as if you were just a part of myself & the best part too. There's no one I've ever met half so sweet & pretty as you, dearest. I shall love you awfully when I come back & oh! darling, let me love you & love me back with all your heart in return, won't you! I'm going to warm myself in front of the fire for a bit.

A man has just come to tell me that Col. W. had sent me a letter which has gone back along the road to **Monghsat**. This is cheerful, as I is probably telling me to take a shot at some particular hill. He oughtn't to have sent me the letter by **Shans** if it was important. I hope this won't entail my coming back to this hill again. I feel disturbed in my mind by it. My hope is that it may only be to explain something about the missing signal. I shan't be able to write much tomorrow after an 18 mile walk, but I shall be thinking of you most of the time, and that will make the time fly. I hope you're keeping well & cheerful, sweetie, and how is little Ida too? God bless you, my pet.

11th December: I had a very tiring march into **Hongluk**, 22½ miles starting at ¼ to 7; I got in at 2, walking all the way, pretty good. As I was coming in, I met a dak with a letter from you, which I read as I walked along, & didn't I enjoy it. It was dated Oct 28 & you seemed very happy & enjoying yourself. I found Warry came in the same morning. Today Col. W., Walker & I marched 7½ miles, but didn't get in till late, as we dynamited a stream en route. Warry wits behind a t **Hongluk** for Scott. I got Pioneers 8 days later than your letter, so you haven't found out the correct day for posting yet. I got a letter from my mother of Oct 18. Have you told her of the coming event yet. We reach **Mong Lim** tomorrow & I hope to be able to send in letters before leaving there. This dak came out to us with some mules we had left behind. It was very hot marching today as this is a low valley. Played whist last night & won 36 points; this makes me 7 to the good. Last night after I had gone to bed, I got up, lit a light & read your letter over again. I expect longer letters when you are out in camp. Don't get too friendly with Mrs Cadge, for God's sake, Ida. I know she is very kind, but she is a disgusting woman to my mind & not fit society for you. I feel so much happier now I have heard from you, darling. It is such a pleasure to read your letter again & again. You & your horrors of travelling are very funny. You ought to have a special train with your meals cooked in the train & then you'd find something to grumble at. Goodnight, my own love.

11th December (*date corrected from 12th*): Marched 7½ miles only, but we stopped half way to dynamite a river & I felt the effects of yesterday's march.

12th December: 15 miles to **Mong Lim**, boy down with fever. We camped on the bank of a river & halted the 13th. I did nothing but computations those two days & had no time for writing. Stirling (?) & Lloyd marched in. We left them behind yesterday & came 10½ miles & now today 11½ miles to **Palias**. Col. W. down with fever again. I'm going off to a hill tomorrow with Walker, sharing a small tent. We shall be away 3 days. I've got lots to do arranging what to take &c. I'm feeling so fit, dearie, but I'm anxious about Col. Woodthorpe. You can't think how kind he is; I'm getting to like him very much. A

pi-dog has attached himself to me, or rather to Jumbo who has fallen in love! Now I must arrange my packing. I'm drifting around to the idea of going up to you for a month till 10 days after the office opens & then joining you at Bombay & taking my 3 months home with you. Your dear letter is a great comfort to me darling. How I do love your letters & your photo & thinking of you; but how I long for you, my pet, you are such a sweet little companion. How lucky I am to have such a dear darling little wife. God bless you sweetheart, goodnight.

19th December: Walker & I have been crowded in the little tent with only my small table so I haven't been able to write before. On the 16th we left Col. Woodthorpe after going 4 miles & then up hill we went. An hour took us to a **Kaw** (or *Khann?*) village where we changed guides & then went up hill over a ridge & down through a small village to a stream where we had breakfast, then up hill again to a **Kwi** village where we camped. They were very interested in us & Jumbo & sat in a circle in front of the tent for over an hour & then watched me have my bath. On the 17th we had a long up & down hill march circling round our hill, up & down steep ridges we went; finally camped below the hill. On the 18th we came straight up hill, 3 hours, height 6,300, but there was nothing but clouds when we got there, so we could see nothing, cleared a small place for our tent & had water carried up. It was very cold so we had dinner early & were in bed by ½ past 7 & read a bit. Today it has again been nothing but clouds and rain, the tent & everything dripping just now, evening it cleared up a bit & we had a wonderful view in all directions over clouds. I hope tomorrow will be clear, I want to observe & get away. Now I must give up my table to dinner, so goodnight, my darling. I think of you so often, sweetie & wonder what you are doing & whether you're happy & well & baby too. Tell me all she does. I think perhaps I'll go home with you after all. Anyhow I will try & think out the best plan, but I don't know your ideas yet, so can't make up my mind.

22nd December, Kenglap: We had a beastly time on the hill; it was too wet to write. The 19th & 20th we were in clouds & rain, everything wet, so we lay in bed most of the time. On the 21st it cleared for about 1 hour in the early morning & then down came the clouds again, but I had time to get an angle to a hill near **Mong Sing** (Mong Ling?) which I did & then off we went. We had a long march not getting into camp in a **Kwi** village till 6 pm. Today we came down in an hour to the **Mekong**, which is nearly as large as the **Salween**, & then we had 8 miles along the river bed over rocks & sand & crossed it here & got to our main camp; jolly glad we were too. We saw a deer on the other bank as we were coming down. Col. W. left on the 20th & Scott & everyone else yesterday. Mrs Scott has come; it's an awful nuisance, isn't it?; it's really beastly selfish of them. We go on tomorrow & go 52 miles to **Mong Sing** in 3 marches for Christmas Day. Col. Woodthorpe left us 2 bottles of Champagne in case we spent Christmas by ourselves, wasn't it good of him. I had a pain in the back yesterday from the damp I suppose, but I'm all right again & as fit as possible. No dak yet & no chance of sending one either.

24th December: Yesterday we march (*sic*) miles down the bed of the **Mekong** & then had to cross a small river, our things being taken off the mules & ferried across, delayed us a lot, so we had breakfast & then to my huge delight a dak turned up with your letter of Nov. 5, one from Wiffs (**Wilfred**) saying he was going on the **Waziristan** Expedition, & one from home. We then marched on another 10 miles & halted at 5 o'clock, dinner very late, so no time to write.

Today we did 21 miles & get into **Mong Sing** tomorrow. Now to answer your dear letter. First of all about staying up in **Naini Tal**. I think it's far the best plan, only wish you'd agreed to it when I proposed it in **Bangalore**; it would have saved you so much trouble. It's no use asking me what to do, sweetie, it takes such age sending an answer. Certainly sell Arali⁹ for 350/- & everything else you can. I'm sorry Jane is troubling you but I think she is worth the extra 4/-, the butler hardly is, but that doesn't much matter. I'm distressed, dearie, that father should have thought your dresses shabby, I'm afraid I've been stinting you, darling. I only meant to try & save for you to get good things in England, but I hope now you will get whatever you want, darling. Your dress sounds pretty, I should like you to get another pretty one too. I suppose by the time this reaches you, you will have settled about the house. Of course we will pay the rent for the **Naini Tal** house, tell father & thank for saying we needn't; how much is it? I wouldn't have the animals up for such a short time, it all costs money & they

9 His pony.

have comfortable homes in **Bangalore**. What a sweet darling you are, I miss you most dreadfully & love getting your dear loving letters. You're quite right about getting a nurse early. Aug. 15 was the last day of your being unwell; from which I make out baby will arrive May 25¹⁰, but tell me if the nurse thinks differently. Don't forget to pay for your coolies, darling, I mean the ones carrying your baggage, besides dhandy (?) men. I think of you now in your Christmas camp at **Raumagar**. Don't get too friendly with Mrs Cadge, there's a dear; there are plenty of nice women in the world without her; you know anyone can get round you. This won't reach you till the middle of February; but after this (*new page*) what does father think of baby, tell me. I wish I could go in for rowing together, that' one thing you would have to do with me & no one else; I mean for a race. How I shall love being with you & comforting you. When does father go home, but anyhow you won't be long alone. Now it's dinner time, my pet, so goodnight, God bless you a thousand times.

26th December: We got in yesterday & found everyone here. Mr & Mrs Scott seem very pleasant. He is a short man; she is very pale & sickly looking. We all had Christmas dinner with them & then afterwards the Khasias danced & we got to bed about 1. The French are not expected for a week, so Col. Woodthorpe goes up to one hill & I to another. I shall be away about a week by myself. When I come back I hope to find another dak. While I think of it will you send 48/- to the Pioneer, I want to go on subscribing to it, say I asked you to send it, a cheque will do. Yo dear sweet heart, the time will pass by & then we shall be together again, how happy we shall (*New sheet but no numbered sheets missing*).

Mong Sing (Mong Ling?) is a small place, only about 100 houses in a large plain. We've rigged up a flag over the camp. How I do long for you sweetheart; I can't tell you how much I miss you. Nothing can make me happy when I'm away from you. I can't think of anything more to tell you about what to do; remember you can't get an answer from me in time to be of any use, you must think out everything for yourself. Tell me all you do & all about baby. God bless you both, I wish I were with you. I'm feeling awfully well, haven't had a day's illness since leaving **Meiktila** road. I hope you're keeping well, keep up your spirits my little wifie, remember I'm always thinking of you; dear sweet pet. Good bye & God bless you, take every care of your good self. Kisses to you, darling & to our little one, ever your devoted lover & husband, Charlie.

28th December, Camp: My own sweetest little wifie, I didn't forget yesterday¹¹ & thought of you more than ever. I got off from **Mong Sing** yesterday morning at 9, being delayed by the guide not turning up. Col. W. & Walker went off soon after I did. I came back 14 miles along our old path & then a mile down a new one southwards, camping on the **Namma**. Today I came up hill, 3 hours brought me to a **Yao** village. One of the women had a very odd hat, black & skull cap with a framework on top covered with red cloth (*he gives a small illustration*). I shall try & get one. The villagers took me on two miles to my hill, and as the main path runs just near the top I brought my mules on & am encamped at 5,500 (*feet*) by the side of the path. I've been at work on the top of the hill most of the day, and now have just had tea. It will b cold up here, but **Mong Sing** though low is worse, there's such a heavy dew & a fog every morning till 12.

The French may come along this road, so I ask everyone I meet. Tomorrow I'm going to try for a hill in front. I've got two guides with great difficulty as they say it is over the frontier, in part of **Siam** bagged by France¹². By the bye we found the Sawlwa (?) of **Mong Sing** flying a French flag. The French sent it to him and told him to put it up; wasn't it cheek as it is our territory at present. Mr Scott had it promptly hauled down. I fancy I shall get back to **Mong Sing** on the 1st Jan. I'm feeling as well as ever.

29th December: It's jolly cold on these hills, Ida. If I was in the Himalayas I should be down with a go of diarrhoea. I only came 8 miles or so & am about 4 or 5 miles from my hill. The path turns away from the hill, so I sent of my interpreter & 8 Khasias¹³ to cut a path. They went in the wrong direction,

10 **Enid** was born 15th May.

11 Their anniversary.

12 Now Laos.

13 Mongolite ethnic group. The Khasia's descended to the Khasia hills and Jaintia hills from Cherapunji and Shilong regions. They migrated to Bangladesh from Assam where they came about five hundred years ago, presumably from

after a time, but the path will help a bit; however, I'm making preparations for a night out; taking up 2 rezais & pillows, besides enough cold food to last for dinner. I may however get back; I think I shall but I'm taking precautions; by these last two words I don't mean what you mean. I've been reading "The Heavenly Twins", not exactly a book for a girl to read, as it's very plain spoken in saying that men ought to be as pure when they marry as girls are expected to be & also that girls ought to be told everything before they are married. I don't agree with the latter. Half my tent is in French territory & half in English. Tomorrow I go up the spur which is the boundary. I shall march back to **Mong Sing** from here in two long marches. I must be back there on 2nd Jan at latest, Mr Scott said, as he want us all to be there to meet the French. Little things always keep reminding me of you, dearie, the chicken liver for instance. My eyes fill with tears, often, thinking of being separated from you, my pretty pet. You will be glad to hear that Mr Scott has written to the Foreign Office at home recommending we should each get 1,000/- given, according to the rules to anyone on a political mission beyond the frontier; won't it be luck if we get it. Ida, dearie, don't forget if you ever get ill you can always go home. There's enough money to pay your passage home & keep you going till I could send you more, quite & more than enough. I shall be with you, early in May never fear. Tell me exactly when father intends going home & when he comes out again. My mother says we must make our home with her, but of course we won't. Have you thought where you would like to live in England? I prefer the seaside in a not overcrowded part, & not too far from town. We thought we had been rather clever in your have the baby in May, but it seems to me we've made rather a jumble of the whole thing. I mean as regards plans fitting in; but I, as usual, have a sort of feeling that it will all work in comfortably. As a first step I've written for the certificate shewing I have 3 months leave due any time after May 1. The pi-dog has regularly attached herself to me & follows me everywhere, reminds me of Romeo. My hands are so cold I can't write freely, but I don't want to stop; writing to you makes me feel closer to you. I do so love you, darling & miss you day & night. By the time you get this it will be the end of February & not much more than 2 months to our meting. Will baby (*Margaret*) talk by the time I come back? Do you think I shall get more & more fond of our little ones? I've got such a sweet little wifie too! God bless you, I haven't half realised all your sweetness yet. Goodnight & God bless you, dearest.

After dinner: The best part of being by myself is that I can write more to you. Do you love my letters as much as you used to? I love yours more & more. When you are in England I shall not hurry back to India as I want to now; in fact the longer I stay in Burma, the longer I get the better pay. I shall not be sorry to ave some other company but my own. If I can't get back here tomorrow, I shall not reach **Mong Sing** till the 2nd. I rather like going off like this for a week at a time. Walker said he would come up the next hill with me; I hope he will. My hair is growing again, it's the same length all over; in another month I shall only have it cut behind, and then it will look all right. I miss your dear pretty ways, sweetheart. Oh! it's dreadful being away from you. I can't bear it; but I look forward to the time when I go home to you & have a good long leave together, won't we just be happy. You've been so good, dearie, about not spending money on your dress, I love you so for that & every other sweet thing you do. You are really a very good wife to me, the best in the world. I can't tell you how much I adore you. When we come out from home again, either Col. Woodthorpe or Major Gore will be Surveyor General & I know they will give me a good party. I shouldn't be surprised if Colonel Holdich is the next S.G. when Col. Thuillier retires in March next. Jumbo dreams as much as ever. Now it's too cold to stay out if bed, so goodnight dearie; think of my lonely little bed.

31st December: Yesterday I didn't have to sleep out, but I had a very long day. Starting at 7, I went up for about 2 hours by the path already cut& then had to cut. I had the Khasias ahead, but our progress was slow. As I was getting to about 6,500 ft, I thought I must be near my hill, when I found I had to make a great dip down again, before the final climb. Then I found an old path which took me to near the top, but the worst was the last ¼ mile, a tangled mass of thorny jungle. However, I got through at last & had a fine view; but it had taken us 5 hours to get up. I left at 3.30 & got down to camp at 6, pretty tired out. Today I commenced to march back to **Mong Sing** & am now after 17 mile march, only 13 miles from **Mong Sing**, on the path from **Kenglap** (*Lat 20.881, Long 100.644*). On the way I went to my first hill & did a few observations; and then passing through a **Yao** village. I photoed a

Tibet, and now form one of the major matriarchal tribes in Bangladesh.

---an (paper damaged) & bought a Yao woman's dress, trousers, blouse & hat with a very pretty cloth they wear on the hat. The whole cost 11/- but it will do as a fancy dress for you for next 10 years. The trousers only come down to just below the knee, but you won't mind that I dare say. I got in at 3.30 & as soon as my tent was pitched, dozed on my bed, then had tea, bath & took of 5 days beard & now I'm enjoying a pipe. It is the last day of the old year. A happy new year, to you, my own darling, I wish there was a prospect of spending more of it with you. If father was going home sooner you might have gone with him; you may if you like but I fancy you'll be too near the time to travel. Ida, as you must have lots of money by now; you might tell Grindlay, if the money has been sent to him (Messrs. Grindlay, Groome & Co. Bombay) to send home 500 rupees to credit to my account with Messrs. Cox & Co. Charing Cross, London. I want, if you agree, to send some cheroots home to be there when father arrives say 300 if so. You might write to Messrs. McDowell & Co. Madras & ask them to send home to your mother 300 Bahadurs (?) No. 2, prepaying all duty &c & then you pay them. It will be about 50/- & I want to make father a present. Send home 500 if you like, but I don't think he'll be home long enough to smoke them. Better tell father --- (*paper damaged*) he might send some home for himself. Two years ago we were at **Chillingham**¹⁴, 4 days married. I hope you haven't got all the animals up to **Naini (Tal)** for so short a time. I'm feeling as fit as ever, not getting thin this year a bit. You dear little sweetheart, I simply adore you. I hope you won't get accustomed to get on without me. I like to think you look to me for help.

2nd January 1895: Got in yesterday. The French came in late last night. Dak just off. None in. Goodbye & God bless you; your own loving husband, Charlie.

4th January, Camp, **Mong Sing**: My own sweet little wife, I finished off my letter in a great hurry & then found that the dak had gone. I was so annoyed, it wasn't the regular dak, but a special one with an official telegram home. Well, I got in here on the 1st & that evening the French, or some of them, arrived. M. Paris, their head is about 60, short, long beard & wears a big hat like a stage villain.

5th January: To continue – The others came in later during dinner which they had with us. Captain Rivière & Lieut. Seuvre of the Artillery are the Survey Officers & M. Caillat is M. Paris' Secretary. They are all pleasant & very friendly. We dined with them last night; now we are waiting for the other 3 Frenchmen, M. Pontalis, Dr. Lefebvre & Lieut. Thomasin. Their escort are **Annamese**, something like Chinese, with curious hats like tin plates on their heads. I've been writing very little the last few days, hoping for a dak to arrive. When I got in Jan.1 I found Walker down with fever, 4 days of it, but he's all right now. We've had two consultations with the French, everything going on most amicably, we take their survey & they accept ours, but ours is much the more accurate. They are in camp about 200 yards off, a mess house has been built for them & also for us. The Scotts continue very pleasant, he is extraordinarily like Father, leaning forward when he walks & talks just like he is (*sic*) & has the same eyebrows & expression. Mrs Scott said to Walker she didn't like Ainslie. They asked him to tea one day in camp & he came in pyjamas. I can hardly believe it all the same. My French improves a bit; none of the French here talk English, but the three others are supposed to. There's a heavy fog till 11 every morning, after that it becomes hot. I hope to go off to a hill again shortly about 2 days off. It's in the direction everyone will go, so I shall not be alone for long & very likely one of the French will go with me. I'm as well as possible. It is so nice to get into the new year, it makes our meeting not so far off.

6th January: A dak came in yesterday afternoon to my great delight. I am so happy with your dear sweet letter. (*It's a pity none of these were kept.*) You seemed doubtful when you wrote whether yo would stay in **Naini** or not. I know it's difficult to decide, but having our little house all comfy in **Bangalore**, would have decided me in favour of going down. However, you will have made up your mind long before this reaches you & I can do nothing to help you worse luck. I'm going out for one night to a hill about 7 miles off this afternoon, so I've plenty to do. I would do anything dearie, to be always with you. I'm afraid I must stick to the Survey, but not always in a party like this. When we come out from home again, I hope always to take you out into camp again. It certainly was odd the Johnsons going into the house without letting us know; run them in for the rent. I'm feeling perfectly well. You poor little darling, how I wish I was with you to comfort you, dear, in your sickness. If you have any more babies

14 Near Wooller, Northumberland.

I will be with you; you feel more comfy with me to take care of you, don't you? Don't talk of being a better wife, you darling; I want nothing better or sweeter than you are; you're perfection in my eyes & I love you awfully, and wonder how patient & loving you are to me. I've bought a few more curiosities in the bazaar yesterday, curious but not pretty. Jumbo kept me awake for nearly an hour last night with that silly little cry of his when he's unhappy. Now I must pack up, dearie. Goodbye my own love. You are so very, very dear to me, my pet. No, there'll be no fighting here. I always think of you; so glad to hear baby (*Margaret*) is looking rosy & sweet. I think the change to the cold was an excellent plan. Fondest love & heaps of kisses, ever your own devoted husband, Charlie.

10th January, **Mong Sing**: My dear little darling, We are still here. I sent you off my last letter on the 6th; next day we all went to the low hill about 8 miles off & had a little picnic. Col. W., Walker, Warry, Lloyd, Capt, Rivière & myself. I observed there & then we came back in the afternoon. A dak came in that day, but nothing for me or Col. W., worse luck. As the other lot of Frenchmen haven't turned up we are going off; the main body to the north & Capt. Rivière & I to the south. He is by far the nicest of the Frenchmen; so I am glad we shall be together. I fancy we shall not meet the main body for 6 weeks or so at **Chieng Kong** (*just in Thailand?*) on the **Mekong**; so ought to be a good French scholar by then. I shall have trouble about getting & sending off my dak, but will try & send you something via **Tonquin**. The mist doesn't clear till 11 o'clock & breakfast is not over till 1. Then in the afternoon I've lots to do in the way of computations &c & then after dinner we play whist; see something of the French each day; they are dining with us tomorrow. I shall be glad to get away from here & to work again. The haze will be coming on soon. I am feeling as well as possible. I fancy we shall end our work at **Chieng Kong** & leave here in March; getting to **Taungyi** about the middle of April; so I will be with you in May wherever you are. I can't make up my mind whether to hope you've gone to **Bangalore** or stayed at **Naini Tal**. It's an awful nuisance having a lady in camp.

11th January: I've spent the day arranging my things & also helping to decorate the House for the dinner tonight. I go off tomorrow by myself & am not sorry to get away, except that I shall great difficulties about sending & receiving letters. I'm leaving this behind to be sent off in the next dak; so after this don't expect another letter till you get in, my sweet pet, how I wish I was with you; oh! it's dreadful this separation; I hate it more & more. I do so love you my pet. You dear sweet little darling; I'll love you awfully when I get back yo you. I wonder whether it will be in **Naini** or **Bangalore**; I often think of it & really don't know which I hope you've decided on. Cheer up, little wifie, I'll be with you as soon as ever I can you know, and I'll comfort you & take care of you. God bless you, dearest, heaps of kisses to you & baby. My fondest love to you, ever your devoted lover & husband, Charlie.

12th January, Camp: My own sweet little wifie, I am alone again, so I can write you jolly long letters again. I didn't leave Mong Sing till 2 & got out here 7½ miles in 3 hours, doing some surveying on the way. The road was good all the way over the plain & then in among some low hills. Tomorrow I have to climb a hill & then down the other side. Captain Rivière starts tomorrow & I've just written him a letter in my best French. I'm writing after dinner, before I had work to do. I've brought out nothing whatever to read, so I will be able to write heaps. The dinner last night went off very well, got to bed about 1. Ida, Col. Woodthorpe is really awfully good; he insisted on my taking with me 2 more bottles of Champagne & 2 of claret. He & Walker went off about the time I did in an opposite direction. My French is coming back to me very quickly now. Your bangle is safe on my arm still; I should like to have one rivetted (*sic*) on above the elbow. The time is slipping by darling, by the time this reaches you, I shall be almost thinking of marching back. How I do look forward to our happy meeting, my pet. I think of it over & over again. I know I shall think you prettier than ever, whatever you may say. I see the Duke of Edinburgh's daughter, who married prince Ferdinand of Bulgaria, has had a second baby in October. She was only married in Jan. 1893; so she has had 2 in 21 months!! God bless you, my pet, I do so adore you dearest, you're a dear good little wifie & the pride of my heart. Goodnight my pet; how I long to hold you in my arms again & kiss your dear pretty face.

13th January: I came about 3½ miles up hill & then found a bare hill which is going to be my station. I spent most of the day cutting down trees on another hill, but I'm not going to use it after all. I had my camp close by & just after tea Capt. Rivière came in; he is very pleasant indeed. We've just had tea & a talk. He's going to dine with me tonight & he's invited me for the future, which is good of him. I know

in France they consider it the correct thing always for the junior to dine with the senior not vice versa. He's got news of the other French & we may meet them tomorrow. It was very hot today & the haze is coming on. I'm feeling as well as ever, and love you like anything, you dear little darling.

14th January: We had breakfast before starting; observed at my station & then came down hill about 4½ miles to a jungle camp in a valley. Capt. Rivière took a photograph of our camp. Just now he got a letter from M. Paris to say the other Frenchmen were coming in today. The man who brought the note goes back tomorrow; so I can send this in. We've two bad marches ahead to get to **Mong Long**. This path is evidently hardly used at all. I saw Col. Woodthorpe's hill today, so I'm connected on all right. I do so long to know what you've decided on; you may be quite sure I shall be quite content with whatever your decision is; but if I knew I could write about it & discuss our plans. I'm feeling as well as possible, but can't feel happy without you. I miss your dear sweet ways too much.

¼ to 7: I've just been inking up my angle book. Rivière is out taking the latitude by observations to the polar star, but we shall have dinner soon & I will finish this afterwards.

After dinner: I buck (?) away at my French like anything; it's wonderful how it comes back, when one is obliged to speak it. Now, goodbye, my sweetie, God bless & take care of you & give us a dear happy meeting. Ever your own devoted lover & husband, Charlie.

15th January, Camp, My darling little wifie, We had no end of a march today. To begin with Rivière likes to have his breakfast about 8 before starting; then one of his mules strayed, so it was 10 before we started. My mules has gone off at 8. The path was awful. We crossed a stream 100 times; I walked through it; my pony gave me one fall, not bad, but he rushes at any obstacle or bad bit. Rivière would insist on marching just behind his mules which made our progress slow. I went ahead & waited ¾'s of an hour for him; then the guides lost the path & that delayed. Finally I went ahead again, and found my mules just unladen at a place close to the stream, now a big one; the coolies cleared a place for my tent, then I got a message from Rivière to say he had halted 2 miles back. Most of my things are wet & I should think all his are, as I saw several of his mules get into deep water & swim. I shall wait for him here & we shall probably go on after breakfast. I fancy I've come about 12 miles and their ought to be a village about 2 miles ahead. I shall dynamite the stream tomorrow, there ought to be lots of fish. I've got a big fire & everything is drying. It was near 6 when I reached camp, so I shall not have dinner till late. I do so wish I knew your plans, I could write such a lot more. I shall not try to back via **Tonquin** because it might make me late, but it would have been a very jolly trip, as the steamer has to go via **Singapore & Ceylon**. I fancy the Scotts & perhaps Col. Woodthorpe will go that way; but I'll march the shortest way to **Taungyi**, and get to you the quickest way, wherever you are. I'm feeling wonderfully well. Rivière took a photo of our camp yesterday, the part with my tent & us two sitting in front of it has come out very well; one of his men took off the camp. He has about ½ a dozen **Annamite** troops with him, much like Chinese, wear the big hat & have no uniform. I don't think they'd be much use for fighting. The head of the caravan carries a French flag, so that they may not be mistaken for dacoits¹⁵ on the war path, which they might well be.

16th January: I waited at my camp for Rivière & gave him breakfast, then went on, found that the villagers had improved the road a lot; however we only did 4 miles to a **Lanten** village; as I saw a good hill to visit up which we go tomorrow & also Rivière wanted to get his things dried; so we had an easy afternoon in camp. I have great difficulty now in getting my villagers to understand today (*sic*) conversation had to go on through a **Burman, Shan, Panthay, Annamite** & then the **Lanten**. Rivière is delighted with the chapattis, he has never tasted them before. Talking so much French I'm beginning to find myself talking French to the Khalasis. I'm longing for a dak, to give me more news of you, also some newspapers to read. It's about 6 now; the **Lantens** have been about our camp all day very curious. I've no more news today, except you'll be surprised to hear that I adore you more than ever. I had a good think about you this afternoon, thought of you sitting on my lap, & what a dear sweet little wifie, you are, except that you don't kiss me half enough; in fact you're not half so fond of it as I am, you know you don't often kiss me of your own accord.

15 A band of armed robbers.

17th January: I got back from my hill at 3 & found a dak to my great delight with your letter & a dear sweet one too of Nov. 25. I will manage somehow to be with you till about the middle of June & then I'll be with you at **Bombay** on 1st Aug. or thereabouts & we'll go home together. I hope now you've decided to stay at **Naini**. You & baby seem very well in the jolly cold climate. If you have decided, dearie, I hope you have given up the **Bangalore** house as soon as possible; you see all that costs about 130/- a month. It would be convenient in many ways to step into your mother's house, but your descriptions of **Bedford** do not fascinate me & surely the house will be a bit big for us. However as you will have a year there without me, it will be for you to decide what you like. & there's no great hurry about settling I suppose. I got a receipt for the MO (*money order*) I sent to father 500/- signed by his head assistant, let me know if you got it all right. Rivière is out taking latitudes from the stars. It looks like more fighting in **Waziristan**; aren't you sorry I'm not there; they'll get the frontier medal. I'm getting my letters in to you much oftener than I though possible. Your letter took just a month from **Moné**, where the last post office is. I fancy it must be your imagination thinking you quickened on Nov 14; it's only 3 months. I'm very glad you're getting mother to send you out some gloves &c & after we come again after our furlough you must leave your measure (*sic*) for everything behind in England, you will get much better things. Dearie I wish you'd ask Dr Cadge about your toe; it's much better to ask a doctor in time (?). I congratulate you on your fish I would pickle mine with pleasure, but alas, I have no vinegar. To my horror we had a village pig for dinner yesterday. It was awkward, I had to make a show of eating it; first pig's head, then horrors pigs kidneys; then roast pig, fortunately we ended up with curried fowl, and I took it out in that (*sic*). I'm feeling awfully well, dearie, but getting very impatient to be with you once more. Now, Ida, this is my present plan; to reach you about May 7 or 10. I presume office will open about June 5; well I will ask for 15 days casual leave from then, so that I shall leave you about June 15, when baby would be about 3 weeks old & you would then be well again. We should be separated for 1½ months; I could settle up our affairs & then we would meet in **Bombay**. I think that is the best plan, but whatever we do dearie, keep up a brave heart & everything will go swimmingly. Now, my darling, goodbye & God bless you; heaps of kisses to you & baby (little Ida) (*Ida Margaret*). My fondest love to you darling, I'm so happy with your loving letter, ever your devoted lover & husband, Charlie.

I got your telegram too dated Dec. 15, wishing me happy New Year; you dear.

19th January 1895, Camp, **M. Long**: My dearest pet, We marched in here yesterday. There are about 30 houses near a stream, the **Nam Hta**. The last 3 miles were across a plain, long grass. The whole plain has been deserted & M. Long has only been re-populated during the last 3 years. We found *zayats*¹⁶ for us & we were escorted in with a gong sounding. Dynamited the stream & got 3 fair fish & other small ones. I hate writing in a *zayat*, the floor is too shaky. Today we had to halt to get rice for the men. In the afternoon I took my plane table out into the open & sketched in the hills round. I've got to make a tracing of the road on to **Mong Pukha**, so cannot write ore, darling, but I love you much more than you do me! Oh! how I long for you, dearest. No one knows how dear you are to me & what a dear sweet little wifie you are. I simply adore you & think you awfully sweet & pretty.

21st January: I didn't write yesterday as I had a bit of a headache from the sun, all right again today. Yesterday we came about 14 miles, but today only 8; and tomorrow we reach **Mong Pukha**. The path has been very good indeed & though there are no villages on the path, there must be plenty of villages in the hills, as at each halt there've (*sic*) been a lot of a new tribe **Khaums** down to see us. They seem very pleasant people. As Capt. Rivière wanted to hurry on, I've stopped my triangulation for the present. We survey along the path & as much as we can see on both sides. The Khaums have very pretty pipes, long of black wood with bands of silver. I shall buy some. There are about 20 of them watching me writing now; only men. All the hill people keep their ladies in the background. Col. W. lent me his musical troubadour to amuse them & one or two other things as well. This month is getting on. I don't write you any advice now, about **Naini** or **Bangalore**, because you must have decided by now. I hope you got rid of the Bangalore house as soon (?) as possible. The haze is coming on thick; I

16 A Burmese building found in almost every village, serving primarily as a shelter for travellers, while also being used an assembly place for religious occasions as well as for the villagers to meet to discuss the needs and plans of the village.

shall only be able to observe at two more stations, but I'm getting in a lot of detail en route. What a funny family the Griggs are over their plans. The troubadour is playing tunes on my table now so I'm surrounded. Rivière knows a little **Shan** & while we were in **Mong Long** sitting talking to the people, two old women joked, a younger & rather pretty girl saying what a fine husband I'd make as of course I'm much bigger than any of their men. However I don't think I'll marry a **Shan** just yet. It's weary work without you, my pet. I miss you more & more. You're just the sort of little wifie that suits me, so sweet & loving. God bless you, my pet. Goodnight.

22nd January: We had a long 17 mile march today; as after marching 11 miles to **Pukha**, we found it deserted & our mules gone on to **Takat** where the people had moved, 6 miles further on. We got in about 4 feeling a bit tired, but the road was good. We're 5 marches, 64 miles from **Cheng Kong**, but as we've got to survey the country between here & the **Mekong**, it will (*be*) nearly a month before we get there. The paths are very bad & while the villagers are improving things we're going two days eastward to a hill I want to observe from. Then we go back to **Pukha** & then down the new path towards the **Mekong**. We may very likely have to leave our mules behind & go with coolies only. I'm feeling very well, but I want to be with you to comfort you. I hope you'll start drinking porter soon & milk or egg flip if you can. It will save such a lot of trouble on board ship if you can feed baby. Fancy you with two babies, our rapidly increasing family. You darling, you will have a long respite after this especially if it's a boy. I've got some work to do, dearie, so must stop. Goodnight.

23rd January: We had a short march, 6 miles, back to **Pukha** to get nearer the hill which we shall go up tomorrow. Our main difficulty is that we can find no roads towards the west. I suggested that we should separate & try & enter the unsurveyed part from two points, but Rivière has evidently had orders not to let me wander about alone. Because he didn't see it, of course it would be much the best plan, as we would finish twice as quick, but as it is all in French territory I can only agree, but I shall do as much as I can for my own satisfaction. This is not an interesting camp near a few old huts, but we may have to stay here several days. I hope not. The sooner we get to Cheng Kong, the sooner the Mission will be over, and I shall be able to turn my face towards home & beauty. I shewed Rivière our family group. He admired baby very much, & said "Quel jolie petite fille", history repeats itself. He asked how long we had been married & when I said two years, he said in French of course, "What & already such a fine baby." I didn't say another was coming, I should have blushed too much. I'm feeling as well as possible, dearie. I hope you are keeping cheerful. You know I will be with you as soon as ever I can & then I will love you. Wouldn't I be scored off if baby was born the day I arrived!! I love thinking of you & our meeting. I've not the least intention of having fever again my first day. I shall dose myself regularly with quinine from **Fort Stedman** to **Naini Tal**. Now goodnight my pet. We work on different scales, survey I mean, which entails a lot of extra work.

24th January: Fancy neat tidy me, making the pleasant discovery of the huge blots on the first page. One of (*the*) men knocked the ink bottle over last night. We started at 7.30; got up to the hill in two hours, but the haze was on so thick, we couldn't do much. We got back at 4. I've just been having an argument with Rivière. He is as obstinate as anything. He wants to try to get into the unknown country from **Kenglap** which is 6 marches from here & all the road & country near well surveyed. I want to go south & try from there, surveying on the way. He is trying to get information now from the natives, no easy matter. If Rivière wasn't as pleasant I should feel inclined to lose my temper with him. Any waste of time annoys me, because the one thing I think of is to get back to you as fast as possible.

26th January: Had a one day go of fever yesterday, but am all right again now, none the worse. A man is just going off to the Mission, so (*I'll*) take the chance of sending this off. You dear sweetheart, God bless you. I adore you, cheer up my pet. I'll be with you soon. Fondest love & heaps of kisses to you & baby, ever your own devoted husband, Charlie.

26th January, Camp, **Mong Pukha**: My own darling little wifie, I sent you off a letter. I've been piecing together bits of my work & then I did up my accounts. I haven't made estimates as I usually do for a long time; but I did today & I'll tell you the result; but before doing so I want again to remind you to leave or send enough money in the bank at Bangalore (Bank of Madras) to pay the 36/- insurance money. I've drawn my pay up to the end of December. For January, Feb. March & April I shall receive

4,905/- (*It is curious that he doesn't use £s, or is this Rupees*) of which I've taken 400 advance & I won't spend the 505/-; but say I do, that will leave 4,000/- to send over; of this the babu will now have sent money as you have directed him; and as you sell things in Bangalore, you might have the money paid into the bank at Bangalore. If in addition to this we get 1,000/- & 1/5 of our pay for being on a political mission that will mean another 1,700/- & we shall be in clover. This is a thing however that will be settled by the Gov't. in England, so we won't count on it; but altogether I think we shall be well on the right side & have enough to go home & start you comfortably there. It would be a great saving of bother, also expense, taking on your mother's house; but you must consider whether you like to settle yourself down in **Bedford**; there won't be many chances of flirting there, but I think you're getting over that!! I'm feeling quite well again after my fever, it was really a mild go, like the last one I had in **Bangalore**, when I came back from office. I'm quining myself though.

Rivière took lots of photos of us two & all the men. I'm going to ask him to send me copies & also get Lloyd to send me copies of some of his. Rivière comes with me one march, I fancy to see me safe across the frontier (*from Indo-China*); then he comes back here & tries his path through the hills to **Kenglap**. I shall observe a day at my old station I went to after first reaching **Mong Sing** & then go & make another station near **Kenglap** & wait there for him. We shall probably meet in 10 days. I may also very likely meet M. Pontalis & Sterling there &, as it is on the road from **Keng Tung** to **Mong Sing**, I shall get some dak. Jumbo is very well.

What have you done about the dogs & cats. There's another little calculation it's getting interesting to make, it's 102 days since I left you & supposing I reach you on May 10, as I did last year, we've 104 days more to wait. I say May 10 to be on the safe side, but it will be before that I'm certain; I (*it's*) feel going quick, when I get below the 100. The curious thing to think of is that it will only be about 1½ months after you get this. I love you much more than you do me. Can you say you're ridiculously fond of me? Because I simply adore you. I never could imagine I could love anyone as I do you, my darling, and my love grows stronger because you're such a dear good sweet pretty little wife, & I'm very proud of our baby too. After this we've got one more year of separation & then we'll not be separated any more & that's what I long for. I should like to be stuck in some out of the way place, with just you. I want nobody else, except baby. You don't know how wrapped up I am in you. You darling, how I long to kiss you, "pay you all those little attentions a wife so loves from her husband." When I'm by myself again I shall enjoy writing lots to you. Goodnight sweetheart.

27th January: After going 4 miles this morning we met Lieut. Seauvre, one of the French Survey Officers. I then suggested that as Rivière objected to my working separated from him, they could both go & survey, while I waited at **Mong Pukha** for the arrival of the main body. Rivière answered very rudely, but immediately apologised with great effusion & said that if I liked Seauvre would go down to **Cheng Kong** with me & we could survey as we go¹⁷. So I agreed to that, it was better than going round by the old road to **Kenglap**. So tomorrow Seauvre & I start, probably reach **Cheng Kong** on Feb. 7. There I shall have to stick a good fortnight doing nothing which will be slow work, but better than going back over old ground. A dak goes into the main body with news of this change, so I can send this letter in. My next will be from **Cheng Kong** & will go through **Tongquin**. There is French civil officer there of sorts, A M. Macey, who will be my only companion; so I shall be jolly glad to see the Mission march in. I wouldn't make a good politician, Ida, I could only just stop myself from answering back Rivière today. Now he's trying to make up for his rudeness. I'm feeling perfectly well & love you like anything. I shall write lots to you from **Cheng Kong**, but I shall long to be on the march home. I've had enough of the French, and Seauvre is not a particularly interesting youth. Now, dearie, goodbye & God bless you; think of our happy meeting, my pretty one. Lots of love & kisses to you & baby. Ever your own devoted husband, Charlie.

29th January 1895, Camp: My own darling little wife, To my great delight I got a dak yesterday just before starting. Your dear letter of Dec 1. Before going further I must tell you how anxious I am about

¹⁷ As they are working in the border area between British Burma and French Indochina, this exchange reflects the rivalry about the control of territory. While the French had cheekily had their flag put up in **Mong Sing** and he has been over the border in Indochina.

Wilfrid (*his brother*). In the Pioneer of Dec 11 I see a convoy of sick had left **Wano** (?) for India included **Lieut. Ryder** invalided. It can only be the same thing dysentery again & as I shall not hear for ages, I'm very anxious.

Now to turn to your sweet letter, my pet. It was mostly about the question of staying in Naini or going down. If it's any comfort to you, dearie; I think that one plan has as many advantages as the other & whichever you decide on, everything will smooth out. Don't bother & worry yourself, sweetheart. I shall be quite happy & think whatever you decide is for the best. It is a pity about Arali (*his pony*). You ought to have accepted Woodham's offer of 350/-. I got Pioneers up to 12th Dec. Thanks for all your accounts sweetie; you are doing capitally I think. Yes, I should be very glad if we save a good lot & will think it very sweet & unselfish of you if we do. Yesterday we marched 6 miles to **Takat** & today 8 miles to a jungle cap **Panghok**. Tomorrow we try for our hill. I'm feeling very well. How I do love getting your letters, dearie, they are so sweet & loving. Poor little sweetheart, I sympathise with you in all your difficulties; how I wish I had you on my knee & could comfort & kiss you, instead of being separated from you & useless. Yes, darling, you shall certainly go home this year & I'll go with you & see you comfy somewhere. Don't worry about things, darling; you'll see everything will turn out all right. I hope you've got a nurse, and everything necessary. I'm going to love you more than ever this time, only you must kiss me without my having to tell you to. I see the Wyllies are going to **Rangoon**. Yes, I hope the Johnsons will pay up. My latest from my mother was Nov 15; all well, but heaps of floods. Seavre improves on acquaintance, but he hasn't much to say for himself, so I'd just as soon be alone. I don't know what I shall do with myself in Cheng Kong. If I was a bachelor 15/- judiciously expended – !! but you needn't be afraid. I fancy we shall have a rather long day out tomorrow, but I don't know.

30th January: We only came about 3 miles & then found a suitable hill; so we put our camp just beyond it & then got me from a village & they & the Khasias have been cutting down trees all day. We stayed on the hill till about 2 & after I got back to camp I did a sleep, having a bit of a headache, not much. Now its about 1/2 past 6. We march tomorrow & I fancy reach **Chieng Kong**¹⁸ the 6th day, i.e. Feb 5.

I stopped here to arrange some work with Abdul Rahim, the sub-surveyor who joined me with my dak. I want to get down to **Chieng Kong** as soon as possible, so as to send him up north to **Kenglap** through our territory. I shall send in a letter to Col. W. soon telling him my plans; but this & the next letter or two will go through the French hands. I'm sick of the beastly old tricolour carried in front of us & want to see the union jack again. Seavre revels in pigs of the country. I think it's that that has given me this headache. I've just been out to help put out some burning grass close to my tent. It was cloudy all today. You dear sweet pet, how I long for you, you don't know how much I miss you. I do so wish we could always be together. Now it's dinner time, so goodnight, my love & sweetheart.

2nd February: It is jolly to get into a new month. On the 31st I did a few observations at my hill & moved camp 5 miles on. Yesterday we marched 11 miles to **Panguin** (?), a jungle camp & today 8 miles to another. No news. I took a photo of some **Lameit** (?) women. I hope it will turn out well, as they have curious head dresses & wear an odd jacket without any sleeves. I've been very well, but no time for writing. I shall have crowds of time at **Chieng Kong**. You darling, you're always in my thoughts. I've been doing computations all the afternoon & am rather tired. Seavre is pleasant, but he is not very interesting. Goodnight sweetie.

3rd February: Came 12 miles, very hot. Spent my last cartridge (dynamite) today & got some fair fish, but never any like last season. We are encamped near a **Khawn** (?) village. The people have been converted to Buddhism. It's getting too hot. I've a bit of a head from the sun, my topi is not quite large enough. Seavre's **Annamite** boy has just (*been*) cutting my hair rather well, & I feel quite refreshed. We've 2 short marches into **Chieng Kong**. It's a nuisance the French all ave a habit of having breakfast before starting, which means we don't start till 9, and have to do the whole march in the heat of the day. There are *zayats* here & I've gone into one. I've lent Seavre my easy chair, so can't write any more. I love you ever so.

18 This place would seem to be **Chieng Khong** (Lat 20.26, Long 100.407) now in Thailand close to the where the borders of Laos, Burma and Thailand now meet. Going north from here crosses into Burma.

Now I've got my chair & can go on writing. I wish I could get news of my brother. I'm so afraid he has another attack of dysentery & so soon after the other. He will have great difficulty in getting over it. I don't know how I shall pass the time at **Chieng Kong**. Unfortunately the people are more **Laos** than **Shan**, or else I could learn some Shan, but talking French has put that out of my head. Perhaps the year I'm by myself I may work at some language. I hope you decided soon what you would do; be quite sure darling, whichever you've chosen, everything will turn out well. You'll see. I wish we knew what father was going to do about going home. I get more taken with the idea of taking on your mother's house, only I do wish it was somewhere else than **Bedford**. We could look after the boys¹⁹ a bit, only it would be best for them to go as boarders; it would tie us down awfully having them in the house, wouldn't it? Only I shouldn't like to refuse if your mother suggested it. Our rapidly increasing family will want all our attention. I hope you told the babu what to do with my pay. Write & ask the Bank of Madras what they've got, because I quite forget. I can't find the address of the jeweller at **Delhi**, about the amethyst necklace, Ida; I know it must be somewhere. I'll look again, because you know that is to be your present when baby is born. Now goodnight & God bless you, my own darling little wifie.

4th Jan. (*must mean February*): We came 12 miles today to a jungle camp, & just now M. Macey, the French official at **Chieng Kong** walked in, a tall thin man, about 40, seems pleasant. He only stayed a few minutes & then went back. He says it's only 2 hours & then we camp on this side of the **Mekong**, which will save trouble of crossing. I'm feeling very well. You must get tired of my telling you that. This was just the time last year when I began to feel seedy. The path was very good, no hills, bamboo jungle, but not thick enough to give good shade. I had my hair cut yesterday, very well & feel quite respectable, as it was two months since I had it cut last. No news today, so farewell for the present.

5th February: Only 1½ hours to our camp on the near side of the **Mekong**. M. Macey met us & shewed us the camp, a Phoongyi Chawn on a knoll overlooking the Mekong, a pretty view up & down. The French are building a stockade Fort Carno P (?) near. M. Macey lives in **Chieng Kong** the other side of the river. The sapphire mines are quite close. They shewed me some large ones, not cut, but said 60/- to 80/- was the price for each, so I won't waste any money on them, as I don't fancy they are worth that. A barking deer came quite close this afternoon. I don't know what I shall do with myself the next 3 weeks. I've got a certain amount of computations I can do. There's no bazaar here which is a pity as they are always interesting. I fancy we shall leave here about March 10 & going by **Keng Tung**, 13 marches & from there to **Taungyi** 23; will land us there in April 16. A week there & 5 days to go down to the railway, will make the end of the month so that I reckon May 10 will see you in my arms again, perhaps a few days earlier, but we'll count on May 10; so there are 94 days more. How I long for the days to pass, my dearest; I've an awful longing to hear your dear voice & see your pretty face again. I hope you'll love me awfully. How I shall love nursing & taking care of you. Ida, when are you going to stop having babies? Tomorrow we are going across to see **Chieng Kong** & have breakfast with M. Macey. I think I shall have a small table rigged up to dine off; it's a nuisance having only one. A tent would be hot here as there is no shade. I'm sending off the sub-surveyor up the **Mekong** in a boat for a fortnight or so. I wish I could go instead of him, it would be better than sticking here. Now goodnight, darling, oh! I do miss you. It's dreadful being separated & I'm never happy unless I'm with you.

7th February: Yesterday we went over & had breakfast with M. Macey. He has a good bamboo house overlooking the river. He has a Shan lady with him, but not his regular wife. After breakfast we went for a stroll round the town, but nothing to see. M. Macey took photos of us. We came back alongside the river, a lot of ladies bathing. They think nothing of shewing their breasts, but they are very clever in undressing & going out into the water bending down until the water is "as high as possible" when they stand up. Today I'm closing this to send off up to the Mission. Seavre goes off tomorrow when I shall be by myself except for an occasional exchange of visits with M. Macey. He is not a gentleman, but pleasant, with the largest thumb nails I've ever seen, ½ an inch beyond the end of his thumb.

This zayat has been divided up into 7 small rooms with a centre space. I've ornamented as much as I can, with clothes; made another table of my bullock trunks, covered with silks, and your dear photo on

19 Ida's younger brothers Harry and Tommy would have been aged 12 and 10 at this point.

top. Ida, you're a very pretty girl, which I'm afraid you know already. Oh! how I long to be with you. Dearest, I think of you all day until I go to sleep & then think of you first thing in the morning again.

6 o'clock: I found that the French dak would take longer to reach you than the English so I've kept this back to send in later on. M. Macey came over & had tea, I bought 7 Siamese stamps & Seauvre gave me 3 French colonial stamps, which I'm going to send home to **Harry**; some of them will be new I dare say. I wish you were here; you'd like a long halt like this, and so would I if you were with me. When we come out again from home, I mean to take you over to Burma with me, if I'm still in this party. I hope I shall get charge of the party next cold weather as Renny-Tailyour will probably go with Longe on the Chinese Frontier Mission. With you at home an extra 100/- a month would be useful, besides it's jolly being one's own master. I especially want to have enough for you to be able to get good dresses, because you are so pretty, it is worthwhile your being well dressed; and I'm afraid last year, darling, you hadn't much to spend. How I wish for your sake I had more money. Thermometer 80° in the house today, but the mornings & evenings ate just nice. M. Macey gave us the photos; I will send them to you with this, but they are very bad, over exposed, & our faces are hardly distinguishable. We bought some fish today, they look good, but I fancy will have too many bones to be really good. Seauvre goes off tomorrow & I shall go a mile or two up the road to see him off. He has turned out much better than I thought; I fancy he is shy. It's lucky I can talk French. I'm getting fairly fluent at it now. My dearest, I long for you oh! so much; you are such a sweet little darling. I count the days to our meeting, 92 now. They are decreasing pretty fast. I still address to you at **Naini Tal**. The more I think out the pros & cons for staying there or going to **Bangalore**, the more I think one is as good as the other; only if you stay up, I hope you got rid of the house soon. I should have sent down the butler to pack up if I'd been you & then left him down there, I mean dismissed him. However, giving you advice is not much use now. I hope darling these separations won't make you too independent of me. I like to think you can't get along without me, any more than I can without you. You are a dear good little wife, my pet; no one knows that as well as I do & I'm sure no one could be more in love than I am. I read somewhere that the marriage of two lovers when they remained lovers after their marriage is the happiest existence possible & it's quite true isn't it? Tomorrow I shall begin my work regularly, as Seauvre has shared my table so far, I haven't been able to do much. I've got a fair lot I can do, and I will write a lot to you, sweetheart. How I shall love you when I get back. I do hope I won't have any fever while I'm with you. All the French take quinine regularly morning & evening & they certainly don't get fever. All the same if I hadn't had fever my first day with you, baby No. 2 would have been born just about now; so perhaps it's all for the best. I brought out a lot of stamps with me, but all my -amcas (?) disappeared; I suppose stolen or lost, because they would be useless to anyone out here. Now goodnight my love. God bless you & keep us both safe & well to our happy meeting; how I long for it and how I long to kiss & love you. You are so sweet & pretty.

8th February: Seauvre went off this morning about 10. M. Macey came over to see him off. After that I read a French book, novel, called "Opium", but not interesting; did some work & so passed the afternoon. Then before dinner I got out my theodolite & took observations to two stars to regulate my watch & now I've just finished dinner & am smoking one of my few remaining cheroots. I'm feeling very well thank you, but long for you most awfully. I'm tired, so goodnight. How I wish you were here just now.

9th February: I'll tell you what I did today: Got up about 8; after chota hazri²⁰, had my bath & a shave. Then took the time from the sun. M. Macey turned up then; he is adding some more huts for the rest of the Mission. I had breakfast at 11 & then did work for a couple of hours, lay down for an hour; then got up & shot the sun again. After tea I went for a short stroll; then shot two stars before dinner & now I've had dinner & feeling comfortable; but I never feel contented when I think of our being separated, just 90 days more. I do wish they would pass. Not knowing what your plans are, Ida, has stopped my flow of writing a good deal. I can't imagine our meeting properly till I know where it will be. I hope though to hear in a mail or two, definitely. I'm afraid you inherit your father's difficulty in making up your mind, only not quite so bad. All the same I adore you & think there's no one like you in the whole world. I've one cheroot left, but plenty of tobacco. If you come out into camp with me,

20 A light meal eaten very early in the morning.

we can make ourselves much more comfortable than we did in **Kangra** in the way of stores. Will baby No. 2 be old enough to leave behind 3½ years, hardly. I hope for a dak in about a week, how I shall enjoy it. You must have had to wait an awful long time for a letter after the one I sent off about Nov. 20 from **Keng Kham**. You dear sweetheart, I'm getting more & more impatient to kiss & cuddle you again. I hope you won't be very fidgety and will allow me to love you just as much as I want. You little darling, how I wish we could always be together. I miss you much more than you miss me & love you more too, but you know that you never have said that you adored me, for instance, I've told you that ever so many times. Goodnight pretty one.

10th February: Couldn't get to sleep for a long time last night, thinking of you & I also had rather too much bedding over me. Ida, these days are interminably long. I long for a dak as that will give me something to read & think about. If I get my officiating step next November or if I get charge of the party; I've just been calculating, that leaving 300/- a month for myself, I can send you home 650/- a month i.e. almost £420 a year. It certainly can't be more than that so you will have to live pretty economically. I don't fancy you will enjoy your year by yourself very much if your mother & sisters come out. I can't imagine what you'd do with yourself all day in a place like **Bedford**.

It's two o'clock now. I've just finished my French novel "Opium". I always get disgusted with each French novel I read; they seem to have no idea of the possibility of falling in love with a girl it must always be somebody else's wife. They always make the husband such a fool, allowing the love making and more to go on before his eyes, without suspecting anything. It's unwholesome reading & (I) like to get back to the thought of my sweet little wife, so good & true.

11th February: I've nothing much to write about. I take observations each evening to stars & midday to the sun for latitude & that is all I do. M. Macey said he'd lend me a couple of French books.. I hope they will be interesting & not indecent. There are 5 houses being added round mine, so there's a good row goes on all day. Yesterday evening I went & looked at the French stockade, about ½ a mile away. It's only half built & intended for an officer & 50 men. They've cleared away the bamboo jungle for 100 yards on each side. This is on the territory proposed for the **Buffer State**; so it doesn't look much as if the French intended to agree to a buffer state. If one is formed they will have to remove their stockade. A runner goes off from here, when one is received from the Mission & I don't know when that will be. I don't fancy before the 15th. I wish & wish you were here or I wherever you are. I miss you dreadfully every moment. I can't tell you how dearly I love you, my pet, & I get fonder of you every day.

It's 4 o'clock. I've just had a combined tiffin²¹ & tea, sardines, plum pudding & tea. My flour has run out, but I get on very well with rice & biscuits; my butter too, but I don't care for it now. When it's hot it gets too oily. I'm always thinking of you, darling & wondering what you are doing & whether you are thinking of me. Now I must stop for a bit.

13th February: I do nothing but long for a dak which won't arrive and I can't send this off till one comes in, so that you will be a long time without a letter. I've read my two French books; one a collection of short stories, had several very pretty stories, but the other was like most French novels, indecent & not interestingly so even. They seem to have no idea of anything like a pure love, which disgusts me. Each day I take the latitude several times, and the time. I've done all the computations I can for the present. Oh! how I long to get a letter from you & be able to send this off. I feel less reconciled than ever at our separation when I make a long halt like this, because it would be so lovely being together, quite alone. You've got the honeymoon stage, but I haven't at all. Ever since the first 4 days after our engagement, I've done the whole of the love making, haven't I? Here comes tea!

The place is absolutely quiet. I'm sitting outside overlooking the **Mekong**, doves cooing in the jungle & a few other birds. That is the only sound, an excellent place for a honeymoon, but monotonous by oneself. M. Macey gave me some more stamps for Harry. It's just 16 days since I got my last dak. I fancy somebody will arrive within 10 days, if not the whole body of the Mission. I've been awfully done in the eye being here alone for so long.

²¹ Tiffin is a light meal originating in British India, when Indian custom superseded the British practice of an afternoon tea, leading to a new word for the afternoon meal.

Macey has given me a pipe. I'm sorry to say your dear one was stuffed up with a piece of wood. He cleared it out partly, but still it doesn't draw well. There's a heavy haze on. I should be much happier if I were with the main body, could get & send off my dak more regularly & ave pleasant company.

After dinner: Feeling rather dull. I gave myself a grand dinner with a pint of Champagne & now am feeling very cheerful & jolly. Oh! Ida, the next time we go out into camp together I'll make you twice as comfy. & if it's over in **Burmah** I'll take special care to have everything nice for you. I did my best that year in **Kangra**, but I knew nothing about the way to do things & you knew more; so I'm afraid what with your sickness & all, you don't look back on that time with pleasure. I do all the same; it is so sweet to me to have you near me, that I can look at & talk to you. I had dinner late as I wanted to observe a star at 8 o'clock. I'm afraid my letters are very dull, darling, I've no news to tell you. I can't discuss out plans, not knowing what you've decided on & feeling dull myself. I know my letters are not worth reading, but I adore you, my sweetheart more than I can say, you are really & honestly not out of my thoughts for 5 minutes at a time. The first thing when I get up & dress & tuck the tail of my shirt between my legs instead of pulling it round to one side as I used to, that always reminds me of you, not a very romantic connection is it? Ida, do you know you write much more lovingly than you talk? You always have & you've only kissed me properly twice!! in 3 years. Tomorrow is Valentine's day, but alas! I and my Valentine are far apart. God bless you sweetheart; I shall ask you after we've been a fortnight together whether you don't find I'm more your lover than ever. Goodnight my pretty one, how I wish you were here to share my little bed!!!

14th February: How the days do drag, however each day over is something. I do the same each day; get up about 8, have my bath, the M. Macey arrives to look after the building of the houses, then I have breakfast about 10 & he has a cup of tea with me, & then goes home. I read if I have got anything & do work, lie down, anything till 2, then lunch, then more bits of work till 5, when I have my table moved out into the shade, have tea & write to you. I might go for a stroll, but feel slack & lazy, about 6 I put up my theodolite & take observations till 8 then have dinner & go to bed, but I don't get to sleep till about 12; the result of a monotonous day. You will probably be glad to hear that the trousers of my grey flannel suit tore today right across the knee, so I shall have to get a new suit when I reach you again. Poor Jumbo is not very well, very sick, nothing bad, only eaten something that disagrees with him. I wonder whether he will recognise baby. I reckoned on getting a dak on the 15th, that's tomorrow, but I doubt it now. I do long for a letter from you, 85 days more! But we will be together only a month after this reaches you. If only we had some money of our own I'd cut the Survey like a shot. My whole happiness is bound up with you. My work is very secondary, but alas! we must have money. I miss your dear sweet ways terribly, my darling. I'm awfully in love with you & long to be with you to comfort you & cheer you up. You must remember, darling, how important it is for baby No. 2, that you should keep cheerful. The moment I reach you, I'll see that you are your merry little self. This time I don't see any reason for waiting any more than 1 or 2 days at **Taungyi**, but it will depend on how the steamers run. If you are at **Naini Tal**, I go by **Calcutta** & there will be steamers twice a week. If you are at **Bangalore**, there is a steamer every Saturday; there's one on May 4, will reach **Madras** on May 8 & you on May 9; that is the steamer I hope for. Now working backwards I must reach **Rangoon** one day before, i.e. May 3; therefore I must reach **Meiktila** on the morning of May 2, & therefore I must leave ²²**Taungyi** or **Fort Stedman** on April 27. Now it's 38 days march from here to Fort Stedman & allowing 3 days for halts, that makes 38 & I allow 4 days at Fort Stedman. So that in order to catch the steamer to reach you on May 9, I must leave here not later than March 14. Round by **Keng Tung** is not the shortest way from here, but it's the way our dak comes, so we shall go by that way I'm pretty sure. So somewhere about April 20 look out for a telegram to say I've arrived at **Fort Stedman** or **Taungyi** & Ida, in answer to that wire me a long telegram of how you & baby are & all news; longer than you did last year. You know how anxious I shall be for news.

I'm surrounded; just bought 14 chickens for 2/8 & one of the villagers wants something for a cough. They've just gone after shewing me a sapphire in the rough, this size. (*He draws an oval 3/4 of an inch long.*) I asked then what price they wanted, 800/-, but my interpreter said that was only a fancy price. Judging from the ones M. Macey shewed us, it would be worth about 200/- in **Calcutta** & 100/- here. It would

22 See footnote 2 on page 6.

be no use buying it as I don't know what you would do with a single sapphire. I think that amethyst necklace is more the line. Don't you think so? Now for my observations.

After dinner: I'm feeling very well. I've taken off the rezai from my bed, it's too warm, but I pull it on in the mornings. I was in **Keng Tung** this time last year with my second go of fever. My observations were very successful, thank you. My new pipe has a whole with a little cap to it below the bowl of the pipe. After I've smoked I find it full of my dribble, so we are a pretty pair in that way. I hope you've been all right about money this time. I wish you would write to the different banks & find out how much we have at each; Alliance Bank, Grindlay, Groome & Co, Bank of Madras & your bank at **Naini Tal**, and let me have the amounts when I reach **Fort Stedman**, so that I may know what to do with any money I have. M. Macey said he had meant to have brought over for me, but forgot it, some cheese, now listen, made of village pigs head left out in the sun for several days & then rinsed with something, milk I suppose, to make the cheese; doesn't it sound tasty!! It's curious how all the French eat pig of the country. They also take quinine every day with breakfast & dinner, and certainly don't get fever. I shall do the same from **Fort Stedman** down to **Rangoon**.

I do so wonder whether you are in **Naini** or **Bangalore**. I shall have my certificate ready shewing I have 3 months leave due from 1st May; so I can apply for leave any time after that. If you are in Bangalore it will be simple, if you are in Naini I shall go up to you till about June 15 & take my 3 months home from 1st August. I often try & decide whether I hope you have stayed in Naini or gone down, but I can't. I think Naini would have been the best plan if you had agreed upon it in Bangalore, so as to take up your things with you. As it is really one is as good as the other, both have advantages, I've written quite a lot today, and it's ½ past 9, so I'm off to bed. Goodnight you little darling, how I wish I had you in my arms; how I would kiss you. There is a bat in my hut.

15th February: M. Macey's courier came in today from **Mong Sing**, but alas no dak, as the Mission had left **Mong Sing** on the 22nd, 6 days before he got there. However, M. Macey is sending off letters for France tomorrow, so this goes round that way & I don't know when you'll get it. The courier heard in **Mong Sing**, that one lot of the Mission had gone north as far as **Keng Hung** & the other to **Keng Tung**. What they are going to do there I don't know, as each place is about 14 days from Mong Sing & nothing to do with the buffer state. But if they have gone, my dak will follow the main body to Keng Hung & I shan't get it for ages. I rather fancy though that they have not gone so far, not to the towns but only into the territory to see the frontiers. I hope so as that will bring them down here sooner & I shall get my dak quicker. I wish now I had gone round via **Kenglap** & met Stirling near there. I'm feeling as well as ever, but the time passes dreadfully slowly. The sub-surveyor I sent off will be back on the 25th I shall begin to expect the Mission then & some dak. I wish I could have stayed with the main body. It's 10 o'clock now, so time for breakfast.

4 o'clock: I haven't had a cheerful day, as I've been headachey & a bit out of sorts, nothing much. I felt so achey about the arms & legs I thought I was in for a go of fever, but none arrived. I've just moved out of doors to get some fresh air. I feel dull & this morning's news of the Mission going off so far, is not very cheering. It's a dull hot day, thank goodness it's nearly over. This country is very nice up to the end of January, After that it gets hot in the valleys like here. I meant to have gone out for a walk, but I've got one of those headaches that hurt when one moves, so I shall stay her and go to bed early. The next letter I send through **Fort Stedman**, I'll send a telegram with it. I don't believe myself the Mission have gone either to **Keng Hung** or **Keng Tung**. If they haven't both parties ought to be in here in 10 days. The sooner they arrive the sooner we get away & the sooner I have my little darling in my arms again. You dear little pet, if I feel the slightest bit seedy, even a simple headache like now, I feel how much I want you. I do so love you my own sweet darling wifie, how I would love to be never separated from you. I feel inclined to cry when I think of you so far away but I ought to write & cheer you up, oughtn't I & when you get this our meeting will be so much nearer; and won't we be happy together. You won't be able to go out t dances, so I shall have you all to myself & love you ever so. I won't let you out of my sight, every minute will be precious. I shall be happier when I know what you've decided on, so that I can picture our meeting. I won't decide till the last moment possible whether to take my 3 months to Naini or home. If you are at Bangalore we shall have longer together, which is the important thing to me. I think it's tinned salmon giving me my head. It' curious out in

camp, I keep much better on simple food, as long as it's decently cooked. Now what I'd like would be some tea in our nice teacups with hot buttered toast & most of all you to pour it out & to put your arm round me & spoil me a bit, which by the bye you never have. Again I repeat you've only kissed me properly twice; the day after we were engaged, once, & you know the other occasion. Why did you kiss me like that, so passionately!

In the middle of the day a man, two women (*and*) some children came & presented me with a little dolly of rice & plantains & then asked me to shew the toys. After that I shewed them some old graphics. They understand pictures much better than natives of India. I'm not sending a letter home this time, I mean to my mother, but one goes to yours. My brother (*Wilfred*) might have sent me a telegram to say how he was or asked one of the fellows in his regiment to if he was too ill. Just had tea & a biscuit & am enjoying my pipe & feeling better. I write bit by bit thinking of you in the intervals. I've plenty of baccy, that's one good thing, but I shall be glad to smoke a cheroot again. Next year I shall have them send out, a box of 100 once a fortnight with my dak. When we go home I shall have to give (*up?*) my cheroot smoking as each one costs about 4d; that would be 1 shilling a day, and rather too much. I hope you are putting down what you spend out of your allowance, because I'm going to leave you at home with a decent sum. Ida, you'll have to settle on a certain amount to spend each quarter on journeys, theatres &c. or you'll find you've spent all the money before you know where you are; don't mean out of your allowance. You'll have £35 a month, not a penny more & I hope no less. You'll find from your mother how much the house, servants & food cost & then you'll see how much you'll have left for amusements, but my dearie. You will have to be economical, or else we'll find ourselves in the cheerful position of my not having enough money to pay my passage home the following year. I really mean it seriously. I want to go home with you this year 1st class & with my return ticket & an ayah's it comes to to 2,200/- for the journey alone. When I'm by myself I can come home 2nd class. You won't think me mean for lecturing economy a bit, will you; you know I think of you first darling, don't you, & I adore you & love you like anything. God bless you my little pet & keep us safe to our happy meeting. Heaps of love & kisses to you & baby. How I should like to see you as you're reading this. It's quite a long letter isn't it. Goodbye darling, ever your own devoted lover, Charlie.

15th February, **Chieng Kong**: My darling little wifie, I've just closed a long letter, 8 pages, which goes through the French post via **Tonkin & Singapore**. I hope it will reach you all right. In the meantime I must get a letter ready for the English dak. I can't send one off until I know which road the Mission are coming by. I had a headache this afternoon, but am all right now. I did my usual latitude observations. They come out very well, & I'm delighted as this is the first time I've done them regularly, and it will be useful fixing this place exactly. My days are very dull. If I hadn't you to think about darling, I don't know what I should do, but I can always lie down for an hour & think steadily about you, how sweet you are, what a dear good little wifie you are & all sorts of nice things & how I love you & go over all sorts of scenes, either real or imaginary. I work out quite exciting stories sometimes. Everyone on the Mission are clubbing together to buy 16 tickets for the Derby sweep (2 each). What fun if we win something. I think another Frenchman arrived the other side of a river. I heard guns firing, a sort of salute & M. Macey was expecting a M. Dupuis to relieve him. Now goodnight darling, it's ½ past 9.

16th February, 4 o'clock: I've passed today rather well, computing; and at 5 o'clock I'm going out for a walk, as I don't sleep well & I think it's for want of exercise. I've been thinking a lot about our plans today. If your mother & sisters come out, Ida, how would you like to stay out here another year? But your father's & mother's plans are so unsettled. One idea of mine is this; if you are in **Naini Tal**, you would stay there with them, next November or if they go to **Fyzabad** (*now Faizabad*), go there with them. Then when I come back from Burmah, May next year, if I didn't take my 3 months this year, I could take them with you to **Naini**, go down to **Bangalore** for a month by myself & then we'd go home together for our long leave. My reasons for suggesting this are, firstly, I don't know what you'll find to do in England by yourself, & secondly, we should be able to save a lot more & have a much jollier time for our two years at home. Against it are that I want you to go home as soon as possible. Think it over dear. I feel very uncertain altogether about what is best to be done. The first important thing I shall have to decide if you are still in **Naini** is whether to take my 3 months leave to go to you, or whether to go up to you on casual leave, lasting till about June 15. Now for me to be able to decide

which is best, you must write fully which you think is best, and give me your father's latest plans, to reach me at **Taungyi** about April 20, that would be in answer to this & you'd better telegraph too. If you are in **Bangalore** the whole thing is simple. You see if your father will be in **Naini** after baby is born, I wouldn't mind so much leaving you just after, but I shouldn't like to leave you alone until you were quite well again. So it is important for me to know whether Father will be in **Naini** in June, or if he is in **Fyzabad**, whether he can take 10 days leave to come to you, as I leave. Another thing to think of Ida, if you go home this year, baby No. 2 will be very young & you won't be able to leave him or her to gad about, whereas a year later you could more easily. It's a very difficult thing to decide on; but when we've decided the whole thing, which we will when we are together, we mustn't change our plans. The only thing that is quite certain, is that wherever you are I will go straight to you as soon as I can leave **Taungyi**, that you may be quite sure & then we can settle everything by one good days talking over. Mind the idea of your staying out here another year is only an idea. I don't say one way is better than another, it is a question for you to think over well. If your mother is going to be at home, I should say certainly, go home.

I've just been out for a little walk, $\frac{3}{4}$ of an hour, & it has given me a good appetite for tea. Jumbo came out with me, but lost himself somewhere & he's only just turned up very hot & excited. I shall be glad when this beastly old February is over; then there'll only be March & April & a bit of May to get through. I've just set up my theodolite; I have to before it gets dark to get it adjusted properly. No body loves you like I do, my darling, I long for you more & more. My little red diary is getting very black as I ink out the days. It seems ages since I left you, just 4 months tomorrow; we've got well past half way. I've got a Mexican dollar & a Siamese copper coin as curiosities.

After dinner: I'm going over tomorrow to breakfast with two Frenchmen. It will pass the day but not very amusing. This long halt here is the poorest fun I've had for a long time. How I do wish you were here. When we've left our babies behind us in England I mean to take you all over the place, but then you'll be wanting to have more! 8²³ days more before I expect anyone, and probably longer. I don't feel in a writing mood now, so goodnight my darling.

18th February: I went across the river yesterday at 10-ish stayed till 3. M. Dupuis is a regular Frenchman, gesticulates & had plenty to say for himself. He lent me 6 small books, short stories; very interesting & amusing. Now I've just had breakfast & it's 12 o'clock. I don't get to sleep till after 12 each night, but I don't wake till 8, so I get a good night's sleep all the same. I'm going to do some computation now & will go on with this later on.

6 o'clock: A dak came in to my great delight, but oh! Ida I feel so sad to see poor old **Ernle's**²⁴ death in the papers. I can't tell you how sad I feel. He & **Bob** were the two of my relations I hadn't (*negative seems misplaced*) the greatest love for & now they are gone. A dak has missed me somewhere, or rather two, but I got your letter up to Dec 25; that you had finally decided to stay in **Naini**, which I'm very glad of darling. I will decide whether to go up to you on casual or 3 months leave when I reach **Fort Stedman**.

After dinner: I've been thinking all the time of poor **Ernle's** death; he was so kind about my engagement when he was up in **Simla**. I could talk to him about you ever so long; he was just like a very loving elder brother. To lose both him & **Bob** in a year, my darling, is very sad. I've read your dear letter over several times. Yes darling, I think the plan is best for me to go up to you direct from **Rangoon**, taking 10 days casual leave from the day the office opens that is. I shall be able to stay with you, till about June 15, and then we will go home together. I'm sorry now I sent off my long letter by the French mail. My sweet darling, how I do love you. Do you know your writing is quite altered in your last letter? improved I think. I miss you dreadfully, but the time will pass & I feel happier now I know that you've settled on your plans. God bless you my sweet darling, goodbye, fondest love & heaps of kisses to you both. Ever your devoted lover & husband, Charlie.

19th February, **Chieng Kong**: My sweet little wife, I've settled to march off tomorrow back along the road I came by till I meet the Mission, so I've plenty to do arranging my things. I fancy I shall meet

23 But after 6 children he was he who was still wanting to have more!

24 **Ernle Edmund Money** 1849 – 1894 his mother's youngest brother. It is not apparent who Bob was, he had no Robert uncles or cousins.

them in 5 days or so, as I intend doing some good long marches, and I may meet some dak. 2 of my daks have evidently gone off after Capt. Rivière I fancy. I'm delighted at the idea of getting off on the march again. The road is good, but it's not very interesting going over an old path again. Mr & Mrs Scott are going back through **Tonkin**, and perhaps some of the others. I read your dear letter through again & again. Ida, you must tell me whether I take a tonga²⁵ right up to **Naini** or only to the brewery. If you've Syce²⁶ or a sensible jhampam send him down to **Katgodam** (*about 8 miles south of Naini Tal*), so that he can bring up my heavy luggage. All my camp things I shall send back to Bangalore with our babu²⁷, so I shall not have much, two boxes probably & bedding. Oh! Ida I'm beginning to feel our meeting is getting near, talking of these details. How good of mother to send me out a necktie, & the things for baby. I will write & thank her. I shall have to buy a few things in **Calcutta**, but not much; as we shall not be going out much. I have my dress clothes at **Fort Stedman**, but have no intention of leaving you. It won't be 3 months, dear, that we shall be separated, only 1½ months from the middle of June to beginning of August. Try & sell off our things at Bangalore as well as possible. A P & O leaves Bombay on Aug. 2. Ida I don't know what you think. I rather vote for going round by sea & not across the continent; it will be too difficult with the babies. It takes 6 days longer, but we shall be together & the journey across the continent costs a good lot. I hope you are all right about money, dearie. With any luck I ought to spend a good month with you. Oh! how I shall enjoy being with you again. Now it's all settled I'm so glad you are staying up in **Naini**, the good climate will do you a lot of good & the babies too. The journey down in August will be hot, but not so very bad. Will Jane go home with us. I do hope you've got a good nurse, the sooner the better. Of course, it would have been much better to have settled on this plan while we were in Bangalore, but one can't always foresee everything. Poor little dearie, I wish I was near you, so that you could vent your ill temper on me. Try & not fall out with father too much. The letter you had got from me was of Nov. 16, so it has taken just 3 months to get an answer. There are steamers twice a week from **Rangoon** to **Calcutta**, so I shall have no difficulty in getting one to suit. I do love thinking of our meeting. Here M. Macey turned up with a perwanah (*a document?*) to go with me, also one of his men as an interpreter. Now I can go on writing to you & thinking of our meeting. I shall arrive at **Katgodam**, if the trains haven't changed since I was there last, either at 6 or 11 in the morning. The first train only used to run on alternate days. Then I suppose it will take me 3½ to 4 hours to get up to the lake & you'll have to send someone down to shew me the way up to your house. You'll have to arrange for a pony. Tell the man to hire one, there always used to be lots, to meet the tonga. Oh! dear how happy I shall be seeing you again. I won't have to stop in **Calcutta**, as the steamer arrives at mid-day & the train leaves at 6 in the evening & I get to **Bareilly** about midnight next day. I can now imagine the journey & the meeting & everything. Is the house near Government House? Ida, if father stays up in **Naini Tal** we must offer to pay half the expenses. Give my love to father & tell him I hope he will be up there so that I can see something of him. If he is in **Fyzabad** I can see him on the way up & perhaps ought to stay a day with him, but I shall grudge it awfully. Still it wouldn't be quite affectionate not to stop. You might write to me & tell me what you think. If you write to the Postmaster Rangoon or Calcutta, always putting 'to await arrival' I shall get your letters as I pass through. I expect I shall be back here with the Mission within 10 days & then we can still stop a fortnight here & yet catch my early in May steamer. When I see Col. Woodthorpe I will speak to him about my leave. I'm afraid **Ernle's** death will be an awful blow to my mother & with **Wilfred** ill too; so I'm anxious to get home if possible. Write & tell me if the doctor & nurse think the date May 25 correct (*for the baby's due date*). Your C. L. stopped on Aug. 15; don't forget that date. Tomorrow I go about 17 miles to **B. Pong** (*Ban Pong*). When I meet the Mission I shall be able to know how long they want to stop here; I think no one wants to stop longer than possible. I believe one at least of the French²⁸ is coming back with us. As soon as I get on the march I shall be able to sleep decently again. I shall ride most of the way as the path is good & it's getting too hot for much walking. You dear sweetheart I love you most awfully. Only 10 days more of this month. Going home in August the ship will not be crowded, very much the reverse. I think we'd better go home 1st class, don't you

25 A horse drawn carriage used as a mode of public transport.

26 An attendant (such as a groom) especially in India.

27 See footnote 1 on page 4.

28 No doubt keeping a close watch on British intentions.

dearie. Our first voyage together I'd like to do ourselves comfortably. Now if I go on writing so much today I shall have nothing left for tomorrow.

After dinner: You don't know what a difference it makes to me, knowing your plans are settled. You must tell me how the rooms are arranged & in which I shall find you. I feel now as if I could write heaps each day. I'm afraid you had a dreadful long time to wait for my letters. I fancy this will go off when we come back here; in which case I shall be almost at **Fort Stedman** by the time you get it. Don't forget this, that after I reach **Fort Stedman** you must address your letters to Rangoon. I'm getting very impatient to begin the march back; it will be a very hot one too, but the nights are always cool, until one gets to the railway, or one marches from it. I shall send in my application for 3 months leave as soon as I get to **Fort Stedman**, i.e. from Aug 1. If Col. Woodthorpe makes any difficulty about giving me casual leave, then I must use my 3 months to go to you, but I don't think for a moment he will. Perhaps baby will arrive a few days before the 25th, I hope it will. Ida, which do you hope for, a boy or a girl? I change, sometimes I think I'd like a boy, then I think little Ida (*Ida Margaret*) is such a sweet little thing & a boy is never half such fun, as a child. I fancy Ernle will have left Alice & his children badly off, as he was in debt before he got command of his regiment. I hope little Ida will stand her first winter in England all right. You must take great care of her because her lungs will be very easily affected. You dear little darling, I adore you just awfully; I miss you most dreadfully. What a happy meeting ours will be & then won't it be fun going home together. God bless you, my dearest one. I'm longing to kiss you, goodnight.

20th February, Ban Pong: I started this morning & came along at a good pace, from 7.30 to 1.30, with a 15 minute halt for breakfast. My things began to come in 2 hours later. Distance 17 miles. Tomorrow I hope to do a good double march, 20 miles. This is certainly a better way of spending the day. There are huts here & the village close by. Going at this pace I shall be at **Mong Pakha** on the 23rd unless I meet the Mission before, but I fancy I shall meet them about there. I slept very well last night, the thought of having to be up early sent me to sleep. I fancy I'm going to write & eat outside, as the floors of these huts are so shaky, only bamboos that it's very difficult to move about without upsetting things. I shall get flour & potatoes, I fancy, by these ration mules which I shall meet in a day or two. It's very hot in the sun, and the big flies keep my pony at a sort of fidgety (?) up. Poor Jumbo, the flies will not let him sleep. This afternoon he tried to sleep under my bed, but they found him out, with the result that there were continual earthquakes under my bed & I had to request him to move. I'm writing on my knees leaning back in my chair, the one Ainslie lent me, by the bye it's very comfortable. I shall buy one myself next year. Dear pet, how I do love you. I'll make up for lost time in the way of loving you. I do hope, dearest, you've had no difficulty about money this time, you oughtn't to have had. When you go home, it will be a very good time to spend the 500/- your father gave me. It will come to about £27, and you will be glad I invested it & didn't let you spend it at once, aren't you.

I'm glad the path is pretty level, or I shouldn't be able to do these long marches. It's not for myself as I have my pony, but the men get tired. My boy steps out well, and hasn't had fever for a long time. He never gives any trouble & is very quiet. Yes, that's a good idea the butler going down with me. At **Bangalore** I shall probably chum with Ainslie & go to the Sapper & Miner (?) Mess. Try & sell our trap; ask Ainslie if he'd care to have it. As for the 1½ months I shall be down there, I can hire a quary (?) to drive me up to office. I wonder if you've sold either of the ponies. You ought to have let me sell Arali before I left, as I wanted to; we could have got 400/- for him then. Whenever I get a day I read all the papers as fast as I can which is very silly of me, but I always do it. Next year I shall ring out a Shakespeare, I think. It will always be a stand by. I fancy Longe & Renny Tailour will go on the Chinese Frontier Mission next year; in which case I shall have charge of this party & work on the large scale not far from **Fort Stedman**. Our letters will be much more regular & quicker even with you in England. When you write to your mother, tell her we hope she will stay in England, it will make such a difference to you, won't it. I feel quite in my old style of long letters again. I like sitting down & just chat away to you; but I wish to goodness I was with you, my darling, you make the house so comfy & home like. I mean your dear self; your just my idea of what a sweet little wife ought to be. You are such a pretty darling. Bother, one of my mules is ill. It has running at the nose. The Panthays²⁹ are holding a

29 The oldest group of Chinese Muslims in Burma.

smoking stick under its nose & it seems to like it. Do you realise darling, every day about 5 to 6, I'm writing to you. I wonder what you're doing just now. It's beginning to get dark. There are mosquitoes here.

After dinner: I've gorged myself. Comp (?) army ration, fowl & sausage, egg carry & milky pudding, not bad; and I feel as if I should sleep well. That army ration is awfully good, a stew of meat & vegetables & so much of the latter, one can add some fowl; a capital thing for camp, where you can't get vegetables. My man caught a lot more butterflies today. A road branches off here, very possibly the one we shall go back by. 79 days more! The time is going by. This time last year I was hunting for Mr. Shaw near **Keng Tung**. I do think it wonderful how I've got rid of my diarrhoea, isn't it? I'm going to advise **Wilfred** to go into the Burma Military Police for a couple of years. You dear sweetheart, I adore you. How I long to kiss you, to say nothing of "holding you in my arms." You say you are getting huge, but I don't believe it, not yet. Have you a dress suitable for your condition? I shall hardly be able to have you on my knee, you are so heavy. I don't know the difference, but I should think quite two stone, though why so much I don't know for an 8 lb. baby. When I leave you & go down to **Bangalore**, I will write you daily letters. I shall have plenty to do packing up & settling whatever things are not sold. You're very foolish about the over-mantel & screen, Ida; but still you may have your own way. I hope you haven't sold the "pram". It will be so useful on board ship. The glass I'd sell, but not the china & we'll take the rugs home. I hope the garden sold well. Now goodnight sweetheart, God bless you, you dear sweet little wife.

21st February: I didn't do my 20 miles after all, but only 15. I found a good place about ½ past 1 & thought it better to stop. The only incidents on the way, were that I cricked my back mounting my pony on a steep descent, hurt awfully for 5 minutes then went away altogether. In another place my pony slipped on a boulder in a stream & went on his nose, wetted me, only up to my knees, but I though I was in for a sousing. I've just written to Mrs Nixon. I'm feeling as well as ever. I've had just 3 hours mild fever & nothing else since I came into camp. I shall get to **Mong Pukha** on the 24th now & if the Mission haven't turned up, wait for them there. Tomorrow I march to **Pang Mong** 16½ miles, a jungle camp & the next day 16 miles to **Takat**. The time will pass quicker when I'm not by myself. When I meet the Mission, I shall probably go down to **Chieng Kong** by some other path, but not by myself. The one thing I think of is to get quickly back to you. I shall feel happier when I'm on the march towards you, then I can feel the time is getting really near. I'm afraid in your present condition I shall not be able to pay you as much attention as you'd like, but I shall do my best!!

After dinner: I'm glad Dr. Carr White is not going to be your doctor with his foolish little laugh. By the time I reach you, you or Mrs Cadge will be as thick as thieves, don't copy her, that's all. I tried a sleep this afternoon, but didn't succeed, so feel sleepy now. Do you imagine our meeting like I do? But you have the advantage of knowing the house. Ida, you know the first thing I say is how pretty you are, well you never say anything nice to me; in fact to listen to you, anyone might think we'd been married 50 years, while I'm always saying nice things to you. If you try any of your bad temper off on me, I shall only laugh. You must really, darling, control your temper with your father, even when you're in the right. While I was having dinner, I was thinking, when I got into the P. W. D. I might have been sent to **Burma** & I imagined I had instead of **Bara Banki** (*near Lucknow*), but I took 3 months leave & passing in the train, saw you on the platform, so I got out & then purposely missed the train, and your father seeing I had missed the train asked me to stay the night. There's a nice little romance.³⁰ Of course after that I could break my leg out for a ride, so as to be able to stay on. I used often to wish that now you see how romantic I am. I suppose it's because you've been in love so often before, the romance has worn off. Do you love me? Then why don't you say so? You do in your letters. "Don't be silly, Charlie, you know I do." God bless you my pet; this is the time I miss you most. Will baby be able to talk when I reach you? And how far can she walk? Goodnight my darling.

22nd February: I met my ration mules today. No dak, but a letter from Col. Woodthorpe saying he hoped to meet me at **Mong Pukha**. He had sent down a sub-surveyor and I shall meet him tomorrow I expect. My missing daks have gone round by **Kenglap**, so I shall get them when I reach **Chieng**

³⁰ He writes as if we may assume this is how they first met.

Kong in 10 days or so. I came 16½ miles today. Last night there was a thunderstorm & heavy rain which woke me & kept me awake some time. I thought how you would have snuggled up to me. All sorts of things make me think of you. Each day over is a good thing. I see the steamers are advertised (P & O) up to the end of May, every fortnight. One has to change at **Aden** & Aug. 2nd is one of them; so I think July 26 will be better; it will shorten our separation a week, and it will bring me out here again at a more convenient date. Another thing to think of Ida, the later I reach you, the later I can stay with you. So if I'm kept beyond May 10 it will have its advantages, though my first thought is to get to you as soon as possible. I wonder how long that 1,500/- lasted you. I should like to know how much you have in Naini. I shall bring with me as much as I can. Money you get from the sale of our things may as well be paid into my account at the Madras Bank, Bangalore. I took some quinine this morning after the rain. The frogs are enjoying themselves tonight. My own sweetheart, I do so love you & miss you dreadfully. I shall have a fine lot of dak when I get back to **Chieng Kong**. Only 6 days more to the end of this month. My keeping clear of fever cheers me up a lot. Poor dear old **Ernle** I think of a often; he was always so cheerful & so popular with everybody. Mrs Elles will be very sorry. If we went home on July 26 it would be two months after baby is born, not too soon I think. When we came down from Simla it was only 5 weeks (*after Margaret was born?*). On the steamer it's all right, I was thinking of your journey down to Bombay, but it will be a simpler journey & not such a long journey either. Is the Cadge's house near yours? I do hope you've got a good nurse Ida. Your little book will tell you how to calculate, from the day you first feel the movement of the baby. See whether it agrees with the other date. I wish I was with you to comfort you, but I'm always thinking of you, my dearest. These separations are beastly; I long for our two years at home together, don't you. I wonder what month Ainslie goes home. All the men are very lively having got their beloved ghee again. I miss you dreadfully; I wish these 77 days would go with a run. Since I first met you, I've passed most of my time looking forward to our next meeting. When we come out again I hope to get charge of some civilised party in India, like Jackson's party. There will be such a clearing in the next 4 years I ought to be able to. I wonder who is the next Surveyor General, I rather hope Col. Holdich & not Col. Strahan. The latter is the senior & if Col. Holdich passes over him, I heard Col. Strahan intended to retire, which will put me up one. When Col Thuillier retires that will make me a pukka (*sic*) 1st grade; there are 10 on that grade, so a lot have to go, retire or on leave before I officiate (*sic*) up a grade. However I know Cols. Wilmer, Rogers, Wilkins, Hill, Woodthorpe all retire or go on leave & I hope Col. Strahan too. Col. McCullagh may. If they all do that will only leave 3 more to give me the step, so there's a fair chance. Mr Scott (not the one here) is or was going to leave the survey too & there are several fellows who have leave due to them. If I don't get my step I shall find it jolly difficult to send you home 650/- a month.

After dinner: I'm feeling comfortable. It's a good dealer cooler since I left **Chieng Kong** because I've got out of the **Mekong** valley, though I'm not high up here, only 2,200 feet, **Chieng Kong** is 1,400. I can still stand my rezaï on me (*sic*). I'm so glad your up at Naini out of the heat. You've been in good climates since you've been married, Madam, **Simla, Bangalore & Naini Tal**, with a cold weather at **Sitapur**; and then 3 years in England. You ought to keep your complexion at that rate. I gathered from Col. W.'s letter that Mr & Mrs Scott & M. Pavie with the French doctor Lefebre are somewhere near **Kenglap**. I imagine everyone else is coming down this road together from **Mong Long Pukha**. I feel sleepy after my disturbed night, so shall stop at the bottom of this page. You dear sweet little darling, you don't know how deeply I love you. I'm still your lover & you're my darling little sweetheart aren't you, the dearest & prettiest girl in the world. Goodnight dearie.

23rd February, Takat: I came a good 16 miles today, starting at 7 & getting in at 1.15 with a 20 minute halt for breakfast. About 3 some of the villagers said there were some kalars (their word for foreigners) camping the other side of the village. This turned out to be a sub-surveyor. He came in a bit later & told me all his news. I'm sending me off tomorrow to go round a southern way to **Chieng Kong**, and tomorrow I go up 6 miles to **Mong Pukha** to wait for the Mission. Col. Woodthorpe left **Mong Pung** (*Lat. 20.807, Long. 97.456*), where he wrote to me from on the 12th & said he expected me to be at **Mong Pukha** about the 26th, so I shan't have long to wait. I shall hunt for a better place to camp though. I had a good shave this afternoon. My boy revels in the heat & walks along like anything. He's as good a marcher as anyone now. The sub-surveyor says a dak passes him on the 21st at **Mong Pukha**, so I shall get letters when I meet the Mission, hurrah. While I'm at Pukha, I shall go one day along the

path Capt. Rivière went by. I want to see what it's like. Nobody loves me! I'm feeling very well thank you & hope you are too, though I'm afraid your having the fainting & suffocating feelings now, poor dear. I love you ever so much more for having babies. Aren't you proud of little Ida (*Margaret*), I am awfully. Have you thought about names & Godparents. Henry Edward Dudley if it's a boy. If it's a girl I don't know. Does it feel like twins, Ida? The name of this place is **Takat**. I'm in a fair *zayat*³¹. I've been bitten twice by leaches; they make one bleed like anything. I shall have to do some double marching to get back to **Fort Stedman** in time. Do you love me, Ida, as much as I love you? Because if so you must love me tremendously.

After dinner: Getting up each morning at 6 makes me feel sleepy after dinner and I generally write till I've finished my pipe & then go to bed, which will be in a very short time. 76 days more. I think you're awfully pretty, as you ought to know by this time. In fact what's the good of my repeating it. There will be about 20 months between No.1 & 2. How do you feel about 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 & 8, Ida? I refuse to have more than 8. I'll put my foot down. I'm thinking what things I'll have to buy in Calcutta or Rangoon, 1 pair shoes, 1 pair black boots, a few neckties. I've got no hat, Ida, nothing between a *topi* (white) & a cap; but as I shall refuse to go out anywhere I don't see that I shall want it. Don't forget that I won't go anywhere without you. I mean to be with you the whole of our short time together. I hope you won't get tired of me. The suffocating feeling is the one I don't like, because you don't like my kissing you, when you have it. In fact you're not half so fond of kissing as I am. I suppose you had such a lot of it before you were engaged, while I've never kissed anyone but you, not counting relations. Do you realise that fact, Ida? I certainly couldn't have a prettier little wifie than I have. You are a darling, Ida & I'm awfully in love with you & miss you dreadfully. I too have got heaps to tell you. I'll try & not be sleepy before dinner, Ida; it used to make you so angry & I couldn't help it; but I don't mean to have any fever this time; and you mustn't after baby is born either. Promise? You dear sweet pet, I hope baby won't mind Jane's (?) going down to **Bangalore**. I'm afraid she'll refuse to go to sleep, but she's older now, so it doesn't matter so much. Never shall I forget that dreadful journey down from **Simla**, wasn't it awful. I do so look forward to seeing your dear face again, prettier than ever I shall think. Now goodnight, my own, God bless you & keep you safe & sound to our happy meeting. You have been an awfully good little wifie & I adore you. There's no one in the whole world can hold a candle to you. I think of you so much, my darling & always such loving thoughts. God bless you.

25th February: Yesterday just after starting I met the Mission; i.e. the Scotts, Warry, Sterling & Lloyd & M. Pontalis, so I halted here, and I got a dak with your sweet letter ending Jan. 3, & father's telegram of Jan 29. now for news of our plans. We start tomorrow 5 marches down the road I came by & then leave & go 4 marches to **Tangoh** (?) on the **Mekong**, meet M. Pavie there, & then come back to **Chieng Kong** by march 12 or 15. how long we shall wait there I don't know, but I'm afraid, darling, you mustn't count on my reaching you before the middle of May & I hope to stay with you till the middle of June. I can't yet make up my mind whether I shall go home or not. I've only time to scribble hard. I will send you another telegram as soon as I know anything more definite of my plans. My pet, I'm longing to be with you. God bless you. It's so delightful to hear about baby's (*Margaret*) walking. Fondest love & kisses, ever your own loving husband, Charlie.

27th February, Camp: My own darling little wifie, I've been hard at work reading everybody's newspapers. Yesterday we did 8 miles & today 9. it rained pretty hard last night so I had a good view coming along. Generally Lloyd & I go on ahead together & the rest come on together, Mr & Mrs Scott last, as they don't like making an early start. We camp a little way from them to be private, but have breakfast & dinner together. M. Pontalis has no tent & puts up in the villages; he lives in fact very much like a native. I think so much of our plans & I've got so hopelessly undecided as to what to do. At present I feel more inclined to take my 3 months to **Naini Tal**. Ida, the difference between 1st & 2nd P & O is 600/-, but I think we'll go 1st class all the same. If you go by yourself, you'd go in November & I'd ... (*page turn*) for a trooper passage for you. I'll write down the advantages of taking my 3 months to Naini. 1st, I'd be certain then to be with you when baby is born, while if I only went for 3 weeks or a month, I might have to leave you before you were up & about again. (2) I can't bear the idea of having to separate again so soon. (3) Much cheaper. I change my mind pretty well every day. You mustn't

31 See note 4, page 21.

expect to know when I shall arrive till you get my telegram from **Fort Stedman**. I fancy Col. Woodthorpe is going down by **Tonkin** & that Lloyd & I will be the only ones going back by **Keng Tung**, & we shall pick Caulfield up there; though I shall probably double march & go ahead of them. In my wire to father I mentioned May 15 to be on the safe side. It would be so much safer to take my 3 months leave, Ida, to **Naini**. I feel more & more convince it's the sounder plan; don't you think so, if you think over it and I hate the idea of having to part again, after only a month.

I too have got heaps to talk to you about, darling. No, I don't realise a lit (*sic*) (**Margaret**) can walk & fetch things, dear little thing. I see Col. Thuillier has got the K.C.I.E. & Col. Strahan is the new Surveyor General & he won't retire; but Mr Scott (of the Survey) has gone into the Land Records in the N.W.P. (*North West Provinces*) & that will make me pukka 1st grade, I think. Except for the going home with you I'm not particularly keen on going home for myself. I should like to hear you've actually given up the **Bangalore** house, Ida. If you had given it up at once it would have been better. Do you see what a difference there is in the time a letter & telegram take. Your letter was only of Jan. 3 though I have Pioneers up to Jan. 16 (Ida, how is this?) & father's telegram of Jan 29.

4th March: My pet, I've been so busy these last few days I've hardly had a moment to myself & now a dak is suddenly going off. We are at **Prabat**, wher we met M. Pavie today. I fancy we reach **Chieng Kong** about the 12th. I got my missing daks yesterday, 3 dear letters from you. I'm still awfully well, but want you, darling. The date of my arrival depends on how long we have to wait at **Chieng Kong**, but I shall manage to reach you by May 10, somehow or other don't you fear. Just now I'm inclined to take my 3 months to **Naini**, but I'm not going to decide. God bless you, my own darling, I can't get on without you one bit. Fondest love & kisses to you & baby, ever your devoted husband, Charlie.

I like your for ever ending very much.

5th March, Camp: My own darling little wifie, Today I got a whole heap of dak, and didn't I enjoy your darling letters, 3 of them, of 6th, 13th & 20th January. It's now 11 o'clock at night, but I wrote you such a wretched short letter last mail I must do better this time. I really hardly have any time to myself; a long march, late breakfast, then reading my dak & then some inking in & then after dinner we play whist. I have very sad letters from home about Grannie (**Julia Money** *née Ironside*, *died 28 Dec 1894*) & **Ernie**³² (**Edmund Money**); it's all very sad & poor mother (**Julia Ryder** *née Money*) feels it dreadfully I know.

We came 11 miles today & go about 12 tomorrow & then we halt several days while the political officers make enquiries, & then march straight back to **Chieng Kong**. Now I've got heaps to answer in your letters. I'm glad your not going to do much more marching. I wish you were staying with someone else but the Cadges, but as she is kind to you, that makes up for a lot of other faults. As the Wyllies have taken the house on, there was no hurry about sending Jane down. I'm afraid you are rather spoiling her. Ida, poor little darling, it was long for you to be without letters, but when once you began to get them, you got them pretty regularly. I've read through your list. I'm afraid you won't get the prices you ask in some cases; however there's no harm in sticking on a good price. My darling, I will love you a thousand times for more (*sic*) for having a baby. Don't you feel bals (?) is a sort of bond between us. I'll love bals & you the new baby (*sic*). I know darling, the pain is dreadful, but I'll be with you & comfort & love you & everything will be all right. You are a darling making things for baby. Here's a special kiss for you. I'm sure there very pretty, because you can work very well when you like. You'll find Ainslie most kind about everything. When you are a little older you'll find that a fellow like that is a real friend, though I know you don't like him very much. I love hearing little things about baby. I hope your picture is a good one. If it is I shall bag it, if it makes you pretty enough. Your letter make me love you more & more. You are a sweet darling and an awfully good little wifie. Don't trouble about keeping accounts too exact; as long as you are satisfied it's all right, & I know you won't spend money unnecessarily. Our babu³³ writes on Feb. 1 saying he had no letter from you, telling him what to do with my pay. Thanks for all the letters you've sent me on. Yes darling, I think your staying in **Naini** is much the best plan. I think you'll find we've saved more than you think. My candle is burning out so goodnight sweetheart.

32 See page 31 and footnote 12.

33 See page 4, footnote 1.

7th March: Yesterday we had a longish march up hill & on the way I felt fever coming on; so when I got in I had some hot tea & phenacetine³⁴ & went to bed & when the things came in, & by 3 o'clock the fever was gone; so both times I've been able to shake it off very quickly. Today I'm feeling fairly well again, only the after effects. We are encamped on a ridge 4,500 ft up, so it's decently cool. We are halting here while the headmen of the villages come in to tell us where the boundaries lie. Ida, when you wrote on Jan. 20, you still had 650/- at Naini & 429/- at Bangalore. As that was only out of my pay up to the end of December, so you see we are not doing badly. I hope we shall be able to save quite the 2,000/- I hoped for. I still think it better to spend my 3 months leave with you at **Naini**; then go down to **Bangalore** & before going to **Burmah** stay a week with you & you not go home till next year; that is if your mother comes out. Then you come down May next year or earlier by steamer, **Calcutta** & **Madras** to **Bangalore**, & we could take a house & live quietly there till November.

9th March: No news. We are waiting here for the village headman to come in, but I hope we won't wait much longer. Ida, if you don't go home this year, you can send some money home to your mother to get you dresses & hats & bring them out with her. How I do wish I was on the move towards you, my darling. I hate being away from you, but it's comforting to think there's only 2 months more to wait. Ida, you did quite right to stay up at **Naini**. I shall expect to find you & baby looking very pretty.

The 650/- you had left will have lasted you till the end of February, so I hope you told the babu what to do with the money. I'm telling him in case he hasn't heard from you to send 1,200/-. ida you will be able to tell better than I how much we shall save. I shall be able to send over including this 1,200/-, 4,000/- & you can tell how much of that you'll spend. The rest will be saved & if you don't go home I shall invest it. Of course baby's coming will cost something & if father is in **Naini** we must pay half expenses of course. I hate this halting; each day doesn't bring me any nearer you. A dak is expected in in 2 days. My sweetheart, I'm awfully fond of you. I've your photo in front of me; I'm so proud of my sweet little wifie. Pretty as you are, Ida, it's your sweet loving nature I love most.

6 o'clock: It gets pretty chilly up here in the evenings, which has given my interpreter pretty bad fever. I'm all right myself. If these villagers don't come in tomorrow, Scott is going across the Mekong to **Mong Lin** (*Lat. 20.706, Long. 100.097*), with probably Warry & Sterling, while Lloyd & the escort go back to **Chieng Kong**. I shall try & go with the latter as there will be nothing for me to do with Scott in **Chieng Kong**. We shall have the map to draw. If we do move, it will be on the 11th. I shall have plenty of work in **Chieng Kong** helping with the map (*seems contradictory*). I love thinking of our meeting, my darling. My chief reason for wanting to take my 3 months leave to **Naini**, Ida, is that I can't bear the idea of having to leave you so soon. You are quite right about August not being a good time to go home, on account of the monsoon. If your mother & sisters come out & you can send home money to get new dresses, your two principle reasons for going home vanish, don't they; and of course up in **Naini** your health & the babies ought to keep good. Then if we don't go home this year, we shall really have saved enough to have a good time for our two years. I like Lloyd best of all the fellows out (*here*). I know him well enough now to ask him about a "precaution". Warry & Sterling are both pleasant, but very silent. Scott is generally grumpy, though when he likes he is very pleasant. He has just insisted on my taking ½ a dozen of his whiskey as mine had come to an end. Mrs Scott tries to be too young. She gushes, and it's an awful nuisance having her in camp. After dinner, for instance, she knows we want to be playing whist & never suggests we should play & never mind her, so we have to wait till she goes to bed. She has never had any children so gushes over a very ordinary little dog she has. I shall bring Jumbo over with me. I think he's so fond of baby. Oh! how jolly it will be being with you again, darling. I will love you awfully! At **Chieng Kong** I shall ask Col. Woodthorpe about my leave. Both my goes of fever have been slight ones, Ida. Walker has been worst off, having had 3 bad goes lasting 3 or 4 days each. This time last year I was having that fortnight of toothache. Now, thanks to having the tooth stopped, I've felt nothing.

34 Phenacetin was introduced in 1887, and was used principally as an analgesic; it was one of the first synthetic fever reducers to go on the market. It is also known historically to be one of the first non-opioid analgesics without anti-inflammatory properties.

10th March: Hurrah! A dak came in with your dear letter of Jan. 28 & 31. how I do love getting your letters, my pet. Poor darling, you hadn't begun to get mine yet. I do hope **Ted**³⁵ will get into the Police, but it ought to have been done when he first came out. I love to hear all you tell me about babs, dear little soul. I'm longing to see you both, but, of course, you most of all. I hope Ainslie will buy our furniture. We will I fancy get into **Chieng Kong** on the 17th. How long we have to stay there I don't know, but I will make up for any delays by marching hard.

11th March: Now I can get to your letter again. I've written several letters for this dak. Our latest news is that the headmen, not having come in, we go tomorrow down to **Tango**, on the **Mekong**. & wait for them there. Then we shall go down by river, only 2 days to **Chieng Kong**; while our mules go round by the road. So we shall not lose time after all. Ida, I'm going to arrange things so that I shall stay one day in **Fort Stedman**, that is march in one day & leave the next. I've been going over the marches carefully & find that it's 13 marches from **Chieng Kong** to **Keng Tung** (*Lat. 21.291, Long. 99.608*), 17 from there to **Fort Stedman**. These are all long marches; then 5 down to **Meiktila Road** (*Lat. 20.866, Long. 95.843*); so that if I can manage not to halt in **Fort Stedman**, I shall require 35 days to reach the railway & from there 9 days to get to you; that is supposing everything fits in. that is the very quickest I can do, 44 days in all, without a single halt anywhere. Doing that I shall reach you by May 10, but it will be hard. Ida, think over the plan. I think now is the best. I take 3 months leave to join you at **Naini Tal**, then go down to **Bangalore** & you stay there. At the end of October I could come up on 10 days leave, rejoining again at **Rangoon**, so that I could have a clear week. Then you sat at **Naini** or **Fyzabad** until April, supposing your mother to have come out; then come down to **Bangalore** by steamer, or better still let me come up & fetch you. I should have 20 days leave due to me. We could then go down together to Bangalore & live there like many people in a hotel, or if we take a house, don't entertain, unless we find we are rich. Then in November go home together for 2 years. There, that's my plan all worked out. You will see your mother & sisters can have (*sic*) out new dresses & hats. We shall be much better off & be able to really enjoy ourselves for our two years. I really think that is the wisest plan, but if you don't like it, we'll do what you like. You know you always have your own way. Now, my darling, I must close this. Think of me as just longing for one thing & that is to be with you again as soon as possible. God bless you darling, you're a perfect little wifie. Fondest love & kisses to you & baby for ever, your own devoted husband, Charlie.

13th March, Tangoh on the **Mekong**: My darling little wifie, We had a tiring march over a bad path, 11 miles, down here yesterday. Lloyd & the sepoys stayed behind. Then in the afternoon, to everyone's surprise a dak came in, with it your dear long letter of Feb. 3. you had just got my first letter & it inspired you. We are encamped in a pretty place amongst orange trees, but to oranges. There are boats ready. We shall halt here I believe 3 days & then go down. I hope **Ted** will get into the police, but has he to pass an exam? Everyone thinks Mrs Scott a beastly nuisance & her husband ought never to have brought her. She hasn't got much modesty either. No, we don't dress any better for her. Jumbo is very well & basking in the sun. he sends his love & a kiss to Patchie! I see Mrs mason has another daughter Ida, only a year between the two, isn't there. I won't say anything more against Mrs Cadge, but as for her not having a nasty mind, Ida; while I happen to know better. And don't quote that dirty minded Padre at Fyzabad, I forget his name, as liking her, because it's not in her favour. Yes, I'm glad Dr Cadge is going to attend you, Ida, dear. As long as the house is taken don't be in a hurry about selling the things, except the garden, ponies, trap & piano. I'm glad, darling, you don't really think I stinted you in any way. It would have made me very unhappy if you had. If you're very sweet to me & sometimes say you love me without my asking you first, I'll do all sorts of nice things for you. Each day, Ida, I get more resolved to take my 3 months to **Naini** & not to go home. Then if you don't like going home alone, I hope you'll stay out here, because I'd love to go home with you. Thanks for all your accounts dear, you're doing very well, but you dear girl, it never struck me to tell you our babu was in **Fort Stedman**, so I'm afraid you'll run short. However I've told him to send you 1,200/- by last mail. I hope perhaps the 650/- you have will last you till the end of March, the longer the better. If you've had to borrow from father, pay him back at once. Didn't I give you the babu's address, Ida, I'm sure I did. Don't send money to Grindlay Groome yet, keep plenty with you. You never would let me spoon you.

35 Perhaps this is Ida's eldest brother Edward, born 1871, or another family member.

Ida, that's just my idea of happiness, to have you on my lap with my arm around your waist & I don't care how big it is. I want to hold your hand, Ida, if you don't mind, while the baby is coming. I've a sort of idea I should be a comfort to you, should I? I'm curious to see your picture, Ida. If it's a bad one, I shall tell Mrs Clifford she ought to cut it to bits. Poor little darling, it must have been hard not being able to go to the **Lucknow** races; but after all, I don't have much fun out here, do I? I've left my interpreter with Lloyd as he (the former) is very ill with fever. I got my official saying I had been promoted asst Supt 1st grade pukka. Col. McCullagh has retired on 1st Jan. Whenever I get my next officiating step we shall feel rich. I wish I was with you advise you about what things to sell off & what to keep. Ida, any things you don't sell can be put in our office if Ainslie can't keep them. Your letter was such a dear one, Ida. Oh! I do love you so. Whenever I get a letter, my love gives a bound forward.

4 o'clock: it's beastly hot in the day here, but colder at nights than at the last camp. I've read your dear letter through 4 times already & it's a good long one. Warry is talking Chinese with one of his clerks; it's an extraordinary sounding language, but he speaks it very well. Most of the hill men about here speak Chinese as well as their own language. Everything seem (*to be*) going on all right, Ida, except the sale of the furniture and we must expect to lose on that. I do so long for you my darling; I loathe being away from you. I love you too much, much more than you love me. I think you could get on without me, much better than I could without you. You're so fond of all your relations, while you are the one person who holds all my love. The march back will not be very exciting. Sterling, Lloyd & I as far as **Keng Tung** & than I shall probably march ahead; Sterling staying there as political officer.

14th March: No news, my sweetheart, but I think lots about you. You are a dear good little wifie making all those things for baby. I'm glad you've secured a nurse. I hope you'll get all your things up from **Bangalore** all right. It gets hot here in the middle of the day, up to 92°; but the nights are all right. I've quite given up wearing a cholera belt³⁶, Ida, haven't worn it this season at all. So you see my diarrhoea has quite gone. I'll try not to be sleepy, darling, but don't get cross with me, there's a pet, if I am.

15th March: A dak goes off this evening. I'm sitting in the shade of some trees; it's cooler than my tent. There is a chance of our starting tomorrow, but I fancy we shall go anyhow on the 17th. I'm sick of this halting. How glad I shall be when we finally leave **Chieng Kong**. The march back will be beastly hot. The more I think of it, Ida, the better I think my plan is of taking my 3 months leave to go to **Naini Tal** and give up going home. Bother it all, I wish I was with you & then nothing would matter. I'm feeling very well, my darling & adore you like anything. You are a real good wife, dear & I can't be thankful enough for having won such a sweet pretty darling as you. Directly I feel I'm on the march towards you I shall feel much more cheerful; but as I shall be marching nearly as fast as the dak, my telegram from **Fort Stedman** will be the first news you get of my arrival & then you can calculate it will take me 12 days to reach you. Don't imagine I shall wait a single day anywhere, but go as fast as I can for you. I'm simply longing to be with you again. I loved you ever so much more for having baby & now ever so much more again for having this one. I never imagined I could love anyone as I do you, darling, and I'll love you & spoon you all day; only don't object to me doing it. You ought to show me you like it. I shall take quinine regularly from **Fort Stedman** to **Naini Tal** & hope that way not to have any fever. I shall bring enough money with me to pay for all our expenses in **Naini Tal**. I want to get a nice suit of clothes there. Won't our meeting be a happy one. Ida, as soon as you get my telegram saying I've arrived at **Fort Stedman**, address to **Rangoon** "to await arrival" & Ida, tell me what the house is like & where I shall find you in it. I get so excited when it (*sic*) when I think of seeing & kissing your dear pretty face again. It will be less than two months now. I hope Jane came back all right from **Bangalore**, but I doubt it, especially as you will probably give her an advance. If you haven't sold any things don't be in any hurry about them, Ida, I can see to them when I go down to **Bangalore**. I shall

³⁶ Although Robert Koch isolated the *Vibrio cholerae* in 1883, it took at least another ten years before it was finally accepted that this was the cause of the disease. It was generally accepted that "the great cause of cholera is the contamination of water used for drinking purposes with the dejections of persons suffering from the complaint." But it was thought that various factors such as intoxication, exhaustion, overcrowding, chill, damp, filth, destitution, drought, famine and even fear of the disease could all predispose one to contracting cholera. To avoid chill, every soldier in India was issued with a flannel waistband, or "cholera belt", a practice which continued into the twentieth century. (*Kipling & Medicine*.)

not bring any servant up with me, but send this boy straight over to **Bangalore**, & ask Ainslie to pay him up. My next letter will be from **Chieng Kong**. There I shall see Col. Woodthorpe & be able to arrange about my leave & then I shall know exactly how long we shall have to wait there. It will take just 30 days to reach **Fort Stedman** going as fast as I can. I fancy a week or 10 days will see us out of Chieng Kong. Goodbye & God bless you sweetheart, heaps of kisses & love to you & baby. Love to father. For ever your very loving husband & lover, Charlie.

15th March, Camp: My darling own Ida, As you would say. I've closed a letter to you, but feel in a writing mood. It's 6 o'clock. I've just come back from a stroll along the sandy bed of the river. You would have liked it. Jumbo quite mad, rushing about & I throwing stones. You darling, how I wish you were here. Warry is a curious chap, likes going out by himself. Sterling devotes himself to the Scotts; so now Lloyd is not here I don't have a very lively time. Col. Woodthorpe will have done most of the map by the time we reach **Chieng Kong**. It's annoying to think we've got to go back there, because here we are only 7 marches from **Keng Tung**. By the bye they are going to put a civil officer, Sterling & 200 men & 2 officers there & run a telegraph line out there. We are not putting down any boundary this year, that will be done next year & as Col. Woodthorpe will be at home, I may have charge of the survey work on it; or if Renny-Tailyour came here, I might go on the Chinese Frontier Mission, both of them good things. Then I shall have done 3 years of Burmah, and when we come out from furlough, we'll have some quiet party in India & enjoy ourselves. I should love to be always with you. Ida, you'll have to devote yourself to me more than to your children. Poor **Aunt Gussie**³⁷ will be badly off now, as she lived with Grannie³⁸ & so had only to pay half the expenses of the house Grannie had; £300 a year allowed her by her sister-in-law Baroness Burdett Coutts' sister. She only had £1,400 of her own, which is divided now amongst her 4 children. Mother gets £450, which I'm glad of. It will make her more comfortable about **Una & Mary**³⁹. I'm afraid **Uncle Dick**⁴⁰ won't live much longer, his heart is weak & a letter I got from him last mail was very shaky.

It's just been settled we leave here by boat on the 17th; it's about 70 miles to **Chieng Kong**, & we do it 2 days. I'm glad that's settled. It will be rather fun going down in a boat, they are very big dug outs. I shall just take a few things & everything else will go with the mules by road, 6 days; they will arrive 4 days after us. I believe all the French have arrived there, also Col. Woodthorpe & Walker.

16th March: 2 o'clock. I'm sitting out in the shade of a tree, Warry talking Chinese & Scott & Sterling interviewing villagers, all close by. Nobody loves me! It's very annoying halting here, when I want to be hurrying back to you. Evidently the Masons are making up for lost time. Ida, so you think it will be a girl this time. I really don't mind much which it is, only I should like to have a boy some time; only no more till I get my Captaincy. Ida, you would make a good curate's wife, you seem so keen on having a large family!! I feel as if my letters now will reach you about the same time as my telegram from **Fort Stedman**, saying I've arrived there. Mind & notice whether I telegraph from **Fort Stedman** or **Taungyi** so you can know where to answer. I shall not be sorry to leave Mrs Scott, she gushes over dogs & dirty naked children. I've got such a lot to talk to you about, Ida, I don't know whether you've any idea of asking Mrs Cadge to be a Godmother. You seem so fond of her, but if you love me, don't think of it, Ida. I'm grateful to her for being so kind to you, but that is the most I'll say. I wonder what you've done about the animals. After all we may not start tomorrow, bother. I'm feeling very well, darling. Last year I was at **Mong Pu-on** just this time. I'm afraid I can't reach you by May 10 unless our work at **Chieng Kong** takes a very short time. I shall try & get our babu up to **Taungyi**, that will save me a day & no need to go to **Fort Stedman**. The ail (?) chota barsat⁴¹ will catch me on the road to the railway as it did last year. I shall have my pony down to the railway this time which is a good thing, as Col. Woodthorpe goes down by Tonkin. I shall have lots of mules & be able to give them light loads & the whole lot of Khasias as well, so I shall march as fast the whole way as it's possible to go. You may be quite certain of that, though it will be beastly hot and nothing but the thought of you would make

37 His mother's younger sister **Augusta Ellen Money**, born 1841, married 1860 Robert Currie (1819-1886).

38 **Julia Ironside**. See page 35.

39 Charles' older sisters: **Una Sophia Ryder** (1857-1941), **Mary Ryder** (1862 - before 1841).

40 I can't identify identify who this is.

41 Chota barsat can be translated 'little rains' in contrast to the monsoon.

me do it, but thinking of our meeting will encourage me. I'm going to lie down for a bit, darling. The heat makes me sleepy.

17th March: It has been finally settled to start tomorrow, which I'm glad of & this leaves this evening. I'm perfectly well, sweetheart, but longing for you. A couple of nights ago I dreamt you were here. I miss you so awfully, words can't express how much. On our march back I shall get any number of letters from you. I long to know where I shall meet you, so that I can imagine it all out (*sic*). Oh! how I wish the next two months would pass, so that I could be holding you in my arms again & kissing you. I get more in love with you every day. You write such sweet letters. I'm anxious to know how much our things sell for. Anyhow not counting what we get for them we shall have saved a good 2,000/- this season. Ida, if our things have not been sold, don't sell them, because if we go to **Bangalore** next year we should want them. I don't mean the ponies, trap & garden, which should be sold anyhow, the latter by auction, the 3 (2?) former through dealers. My dear sweetheart, don't bother yourself about the things though, I want you to wire whether I'm to bring a saddle. Ida, I don't want to if Father can lend me an old one.

6 o'clock: No news this evening. Except that it gets hotter each day, and I fancy it will be still hotter at **Chieng Kong**. This is the only letter I'm sending off by this mail, as the last one went off only 3 days ago and I've no news. To you of course I can write to news or no news. I'm very afraid, Ida, I shall not reach you till May 15⁴², however fast I march. But you know darling, I'll come as quick as ever I can. You dear little pet, I do love you very dearly, there's no one like you in the world. Fondest love & kisses to you & to baby. God bless you both. Think of our happy meeting & cheer up darling. I'll soon be with you. For ever your loving husband, Charlie.

17th March, Camp: My darling little wifie, Just closed one letter, but I like to make a good start with a new letter, especially as at **Chieng Kong** I shall not have much time to myself, & when I begin marching back I shall do very long marches & hope to do a lot of computations each evening. I fancy I shall be myself after **Keng Tung** unless Lloyd likes to do long marches. I think often over the journey back, trying to find ways of saving a day here & there. I shall have Col. Woodthorpe's pony as well as my own, so I can mount my boy. **Keng Tung** is not the shortest way, but all the dak will be going that way, & the road is a good one & so it probably is as short as any more direct road. My pet, you don't know how I'm longing to be with you again. I'm keener on our meeting each time & don't get reconciled one bit to being away from you. I shall never learn to get on without you. How jolly those two years will be in England always with you. Aren't you just longing to see me. I feel quite jealous of your father seeing so much of you. Now goodnight, darling.

19th March: Yesterday we started about 8 down the river, the Scotts & Sterling in a double boat, & Warry & I in another, very comfortable. I lay on my bedding. About 12 o'clock we came on an American missionary in a boat. Then we had breakfast & finally got down here about 5. The missionary came & dined with us. We are in good zayats on the river bank. Today we halt, as Mr Scott wants to find out some things here. I went out for a stroll this morning with Sterling. This used to be a very large place, as ½ a mile from the bank we came across an old wall, which used to enclose the town, but now it's all jungle & hardly 50 houses. We reach **Chieng Kong** tomorrow, but pretty late as it's farther than yesterday's journey. The river is very broad here, 500 yards quite. I hope it narrows lower down as the narrower it is the faster the current & the faster we go. I'm longing for another letter from you, darling.

22nd March, (**Chieng Kong**): We got in here about 5 o'clock on the 20th, found Col. W. & Walker here, but Walker not at all well, & Capt. Rivière had been sent down the river with their doctor as the former had had dysentery. Most of the map is done & will be finished in a couple of days, and the general idea is that we shall leave here in a week, about the 29th. That will mean we shall reach **Keng Tung** about 10th April & **Fort Stedman** May 2; so between May 10 & 15 I ought to be with you. I've been speaking to Col. W. about my leave & he says I can take it any time I like. A dak ought to be in soon. You darling, I think of you so much. We had a good thunderstorm & rain last night, cooled the air a bit. Col. Woodthorpe may come back with us after all. I hope the Scotts go the other way. (*?initial*) & I think everyone else have had enough of her in camp.

42 The day Enid was born.

27th March: Yesterday a dak came in with your letter ended on Feb. 13. It wasn't very cheerful, because you had sent Jane down. My sweetheart, you mustn't fret yourself so much over things. We are still wasting time here. Tomorrow the French dine with us, and on the 28th comes the final conference, the map being finished, and the general opinion is we start on April 1, getting to **Hongluk** via **Chengsen** (or **Chiang Saen**, *Lat. 20.275, Long. 100.088*) on the 5th. Nobody is going back via **Tonkin**, but Warry & Walker may go through **Siam**. Then from **Hongluk** the Scotts intend to go to **Mong Lin** (2 days) halt there 3 days & then go to **Keng Tung** (6 days) & halt again there. I spoke to the Colonel about my pushing on & he says he wants to push on himself & if Scott doesn't want any more work done, we shall separate from them at **Hongluk** & go straight to **Keng Tung** & thence to **Fort Stedman**. If Scott wants any survey officer with him the Colonel says he will stay & I may go on. Anyhow May 6 will be the latest I reach **Fort Stedman** & May 17 the latest I reach you. I think darling, I will take my 3 months leave up to **Naini Tal** & we'll have a lovely time together, no office, so I shall be all day with you. How I shall enjoy it. You will hardly get any more letters from me now, as we shall march back nearly as fast as the dak goes. Ida, I should like you to write home & get least the two dresses you mention at once, say £20 worth or £30. if you decide not to go home this year, I should like you to get a couple of new hats too. You know best what you want. I'm still feeling very well & longing to be marching towards you. My pet, I would give anything for love in a cottage, darling, but we haven't the money & you would get tired of it I'm afraid. You must cheer up, my darling, because you know the baby's health depends a great deal on your being well & cheerful. My darling, when I'm with you I'll cheer you up in five minutes. Think of our happy meeting & how lovely it will be being together. Thinking of that always cheers me up a lot & the time is getting so near & I'm feeling so well myself. How I will love you all day my pet. I do adore you. You're a perfect darling. God bless you dearest, fondest love & kisses to you & baby, for ever your own devoted lover & husband, Charlie.

4th April, Camp: My darling little wife, On the 2nd I got your dear letter of Feb. 22 & was very happy over it. We dined with the French that night, having crossed all our things over & slept on this bank of the **Mekong**, & yesterday morning Col. Woodthorpe, Walker, Warry & I started off, did 7 miles & today 14 miles. Tomorrow we reach **Chiengsen** (or **Chiang Saen**), but it will be a long day as we have a long march & have to cross a river, the **Namkok** as well. We get the Scotts & Sterling there, they having gone up in boats, & separate again the next day. Walker & Warry going down through **Siam** to **Monbuein** (?); Col. W & I via **Hongluk** & **Keng Tung**, & the Scotts & Sterling up by boat to **Tango**, then to **Mong Lin** & then slowly to **Keng Tung**. We are all enjoying getting away from Mrs Scott, she has been an awful nuisance.

I was so happy to hear that baby was all right again & that you were well & comfortable with the Cadges. You don't know what a happy feeling it is to be marching towards you, & to know that every day I'm a day nearer you. I'm glad you accepted 250/- for Simbu (*a pony*); we're lucky to get even that, but Arali ought to fetch 300/- at least.

14th April: We got into **Keng Tung** yesterday. I got two letters from you, Feb. 28 & March 14; all good news. I think the sale has gone very well so far; only Arali & the trap left. You should offer to pay expenses of former's keep to the Woodhams if they haven't been able to use him & sell him as soon as possible.

We halt here another day & leave on the 16th. I shall be able to catch the steamer of My 14 & reach you on May 19. I'm keeping very well & just longing to be with you, my pet. Sweetheart, be very loving to me darling. I hunger so for your love. You don't know how happy the least word of love from you makes me. I do adore you so. I'm so excited at the thought of seeing you again. We had a pleasant march up here, rain made it much cooler, though a storm brought my tent down. Col. Woodthorpe is very jolly & talks away like anything now. I'm sending you off a telegram by this post. God bless you my darling, I'm so glad you are well & happy. I hope you've gone into your own house. The Cadges seem to have been very kind, but I can't get over my intense dislike of Mrs Cadge. You're such a simple little girl, you'll believe anyone. Caulfield is here, but is going out to **Mong Ling** to make a post there, while 200 more men are coming out to garrison this place. Another dak has come in, one we had missed, with a letter from you of March 1; a sweet loving one like all yours; and your letter to the Babu came out here. You silly girl, I gave you the address, and I hope you haven't been in want of money,

but I've told him to send you some. You should have addressed him at **Taungyi**. Now goodbye, darling. I'll be with you a very few days after this & will love you awfully. Take care of your dear self. Fondest love & heaps of kisses, forever your own devote husband, Charlie.

21st April, Camp: My darling little sweetheart, We're marching along at a fine pace towards you & this will only reach you a few days before I do & you'll get much later news by telegraph. We left **Keng Tung** on the 19th in the afternoon doing 8½ miles. We meant to start the day before but 6 of our mules couldn't be found till too late. Then yesterday we did 14½ miles including a very long climb, & today 20 miles having breakfast after 13 miles. I walked 13 miles & feel tired; I left my pony at the breakfast place for my boy who has fever. Before leaving **Keng Tung** I got your letter of March 20 & hope to meet another soon & hope to meet another soon. I'm keeping as well as possible. Now sweetie, I want you to try & do this; send me a letter C/o Stationmaster **Katgodam** to reach there on the 18th, telling me all your latest. Don't order me a tonga, I will see to that & I shall probably tonga right up to **Naini Tal**, so as to see my old road. So I want you to send a pony to meet me at the place where the tongas arrive with a man to shew me the way & another I can leave in change of my boxes. By the bye I shall probably not be able to take all my things with me in the tonga so find out if there's a way of getting luggage up in carts & tell me. I can bring up enough things to last me 4 or 5 days in the tonga. Oh, darling how I long for the time when I shall be with you. My present plan is to leave **Rangoon** by the steamer of the 14th reaching **Calcutta** on the 17th, leave that night & reach **Bareilly** at 1. in the morning of the 19th. I will then find out if there is a train at once or whether I have to wait till 6. I will wire to you saying what time I shall reach Katgodam & then you should know better than I do how long the tonga takes. I shall not have time to get a present for Mrs Cadge, but we will get one later & in the meantime tell her I'm awfully grateful for all her kindness to you. I shall bring or have sent along with me all the money due to me & we shall have plenty. You don't seem to have sent the Pioneer that 66/- I asked you to, as I'm always getting bills from them. We reach **Taungyi** on the 6th or 5th. I can't catch the steamer of the the 11th, but start on the 7th, do 5 double marches reaching **Meiktila** road on the 11th & leaving by train on the 12th reaching **Rangoon** next day. I hope you've sold Arali & the trap. I adore you sweetheart, goodnight. My present plan is to give up going home & take my 3 months to you at **Naini Tal**. It will I hope count from the day I would reach **Bangalore**, that is May 19. so I shall have to be back there on Aug. 19. Then before going over to **Burma** again I'll take 10 days leave to you. I've found out exactly the name of what we want from Dr Lloyd, & the place to get it from!! so you needn't ask anyone. I shall buy I think the following new things in **Calcutta**, 6 good shirts, 6 pairs thin socks, 3 vests, a dozen collars, 1 pair boots, 1 pair pumps, 1 pair indoor shoes, a pair knickerbocker stockings. Then in **Naini Tal** some ties, a suit of serge dark blue & a suit knickerbockers, coat & waistcoat for ordinary wear. Then I shall feel well fitted out. Oh! I want a straw hat & bowler & a cap & tennis shoes, but it will cost a good lot. I hope you've already written fro what you want from home. All this will be stale news, as I shall telegraph my plans & see if you agree.

22nd April: Today as we were on the march we met the day (*sic*) with your letter of March 28. all your letters are sweet ones. Our meeting is getting so near now, only 27 days, all travelling. I've written to your mother (**Josephine**) twice & **Blanche** once. But you mother didn't realise what a long time it is before my letters reach. I say, Ida, the Cadges have been very good having you for so long 1½ months. When you wrote you didn't talk of leaving them. My boy has fever still. I walked all the way & gave him my pony. Fancy you still going to church. Why, Ida, in **Simla** you wouldn't go anywhere & now 7½ months & you go to Badminton parties. It's very good for you not to shut yourself up. You've never told me what baby sleeps in. I wonder if you brought up her cot & whether you have her "pram". Mind & get something pretty to wear when you get up, Ida, day dresses I mean. I've had a cold the last week, not bad, only a nuisance. I had a letter from the Babu saying he was sending you 1,200/-. You sweet darling, you'll find me love you ever so much more than last time, but don't make objections, Ida, as you always used to shew me you liked being loved.

We haven't agreed to any boundary. The country has been surveyed & then the two governments settle at home where the boundary will be & next year there will be another commission to put up the boundary pillars. I can probably go on that if I like. On my way through **Calcutta** I shall go & see Col. Strahan the new Surveyor General & ask him where I shall go. Such a lot of men are retiring, I might

get charge of a party in India, just a chance of it. In that case I wouldn't let you go home. Is it a boy or a girl, Ida? Now sweetheart, goodnight.

25th April: On the 23rd we came 18 miles & on the 24th 16 miles & today 7 miles to the **Salween**, crossed our things over & then came on 3 miles. I'm going to decide nothing about our plans till I reach you, but go up to you on casual leave which I can turn into privilege leave if I like. We should meet a dak tomorrow. We shall very likely reach **Taungyi** on May 4. this will give me an extra day there which will be very useful. We're going along at a grand rate, and I love to feel that in 9 days I shall be in **Taungyi** & be able to hear from you by telegraph. I'm keeping as well as possible, darling. I think of you so much, my pet. I hope you take walks or exercise of some kind. We've had a lot of rain the last two days. It makes the path very greasy & difficult in the steep bits. We get up every morning at ¼ to 5 & march about ½ past 5. I do adore you so, my pet. I hope you'll love me, love me really when we meet.

1st May: On the 28th we met a dak with your letters of April 3 & 6 & then yesterday another with yours of April 13, so we are getting very close. You dear darling, how I do long to be with you. I hope you've moved into staff house. You've stayed such a long time with the Cadges dear. I was very sorry to hear about your Uncle⁴³. Please tell your father how sorry I am. we seem to be very unlucky this year. Col. Fred Battye, killed up in **Chitral** was a cousin of mine. Your letters are so sweet. I love you more than ever & I'll love you like anything. Our plans are very difficult to make, but I'm not going to bother about them & we'll settle them together. I've got heaps to tell you, darling & I'll be ready to talk all night. I had a very slight go of fever on the 26th, very slight. We've been going along at a fine pace. I've pretty well made up my mind not to go home & I don't want you to go home without me. I've hopes of getting charge of a party in India perhaps. Col. Holdich & Wahab are going up to the Pamirs. I'm feeling awfully well, just longing to kiss you again. You have indeed been a good little wifie. We shall have saved a lot, exactly how much I can't say till we meet. God bless you, my own darling, I'm hurrying back to you as fast as I can & I adore you ever so. You are a darling & I'm happy to think I've such a good sweet little wife. We'll be content with our two babies, Ida & we shall be a happy little family. No, I don't approve of your having charge of the boys at Bedford if you went home, it would tie you down too much.

6th May: We got in on the 4th ⁴⁴. The Chief Commissioner arrived the same day & there have been & there are to be festivities of sorts; an awful nuisance, because I want to be off. I sent you off a telegram as soon as I got in, but have got no answer & no letter from you by the mail in today. It makes me anxious so I've wired again. Renny Tailyour came in today, a very pleasant chap. I can't possibly catch a steamer earlier than the one on the 18th, darling; that will bring me to you on the 23rd. Cheer up, my darling. Your letter of the 9th came in today. I do adore you so; you write me such sweet letters. God bless you, sweetheart, only 17 days & we shall be together. Fondest love & kisses to you & baby, forever your own loving husband, Charlie.

8th May, Taungyi: My own darling sweetheart, The Chief Commissioner & his party went off today & now I'm staying with the Hildebrands; they've such a nice house. The reason why I couldn't go off was that the bungalows on the road are reserved for the Chief Commissioner & his party. Col. Woodthorpe & I start on the 11th or 12th & do our usual double marches. You were a naughty girl not to answer my telegram at once. Ida, you don't know how anxious & miserable I felt at not hearing from you. Then I got your telegram & your dear sweet letter of April 22. you are a darling, how I shall love being with you again; it will be perfect happiness. You're a perfect sweetheart. I can't write much as I shall be with you so soon. You ought to sell Arali now for 250/- I'm afraid. Keep any accounts Ainslie has sent you; it will enable me to settle up things. Thanks to you living so cheaply, you dear, we shall have saved a lot. I shall be able to draw my pay regularly in **Naini Tal**. I won't ask you to go to **Bangalore** with me, as you don't like it & it would be too hot for the babies to travel, I'm afraid, but I shall be miserable without you. I love you ever so much more than I did, you darling & I don't feel a bit shy. It will be too lovely kissing you again, Ida. I should like you to stay out another year, so that we can go home together November next year. It would be such fun going home together & going everywhere together.

43 Henry Bidwell Grigg (b. 1841, d. April 1895)

44 To **Taungyi**, presumably.

I don't care for anything without you. I can't bring over any present for the Cadges, I haven't time, but I'm awfully grateful to them for their kindness to you & we'll choose something later on. There was a *durbar*⁴⁵ yesterday, very monotonous. I shall want to get a whole lot of new things, clothes I mean. Ida, I'm very sorry I can't find that Delhi jewellers card for the necklace, I hope you may have it. Sweet pet, I'm just longing to have you in my arms again, aren't you? I mean what I mean. I'm disappointed at being out of the way while this **Chitral** expedition is on⁴⁶. I want to get a medal; you'd love me more with one, wouldn't you? Thanks for the plan of the house, Ida. I'm going to bring my little camp bed with me & sleep in your room as soon as I'm allowed to, so that yo can call me if you feel lonely, and I shall sleep with you (don't blush) as soon as possible. It's so sweet having you cuddling up to me. This is a regular English house and I'm so comfortable, but I want you, dearest. It will be awfully hot in **Rangoon & Calcutta** & the journey up to **Naini Tal** but travelling towards you, it doesn't matter. You are so pretty, my pet. I do love your dear face & all your sweet ways. Oh! I've got a little darling of a wife.

14th May: We left **Taungyi** on the 12th and did a treble march & then a double one yesterday & again today. I shall probably have to wait a day in **Calcutta**, Ida, to go to the Surveyor General's office about my leave. It will be beastly delaying a day. I am so longing to see you my sweet darling. You'll find me more in love with you than ever. I can't tell you how much I adore you, you dear little girl. I got your dear letter of April 28 at **Thamakhani**. This will reach you the day before I do probably. It will be so lovely being with you again. I'm keeping very well. Tomorrow is the feverish march. You mustn't expect to see me very nicely dressed darling, you know I've hardly any clothes. I'll make myself as smart as I can to make you love me. Col. Woodthorpe is making a small sketch of me & I'm going to ask him to make a copy to give to you. Don't be too shy, darling, when we meet & pat (?) your dear arms & give me a kiss as if meant it, won't you. God bless you, my dearest. You've been such a good little wife to me & I love you more than ever.

(Apparently he didn't sign this off. He would not have reached Ida until after the birth of Enid on 15th May.)

45 A great ceremonial gathering during the period of the British Raj held as a demonstration of loyalty to the crown.

46 On the Northwest frontier of British India