

Charles Ryder letters from Tibet 1903 - 1904

His mother, Julia had died 27th March 1902 at Murbill House in Eastbourne, where Ida and the children moved to. Place names and names of family are in bold to help with picking out.

16th January, 1903, to Ida: “My own darling sweetheart, 16th Jan. at **Hlainedet**¹ the first march out. To my disappointment no letters from you this morning, so I left a man behind to bring on any letters coming in by a later post. My carts turned up all right, & we got off by a little before 9. I walked ahead with a man carrying my tiffin² & got here soon after 11. It wasn't an interesting walk, quite level & hot. However I felt it was doing me good though I sweated well. When I got here I found the bungalow looking very tumble down, no furniture & very deserted looking. However I then found that a new one had just been built ¼ mile further on & a very nice one it is too. My carts arrived quicker than I thought, so now I've had my bath & changed. Of course when you are with me things will be changed a bit; I will bring the party sweeper & you will have to have your own commode, because all these bungalows have a little house in the corner of the compound. Then I thought as I was having my bath; the planks of the floor are ½ inch or so apart, so that anyone down below would see your dear little figure, but that could easily be remedied by putting down a waterproof sheet. You know these bungalows like all in Burma are built 10 feet or so from the ground on piles.

“There is a man in the 10th Gurkhas just a march ahead, he left here this morning with 100 men for **Taunggyi**³. I can't catch him up, but I really don't want to, it would mean that you would get much less letter. Tomorrow will take me to the foot of the hills. They look very dry & hot from where I'm sitting. Darling, you have much about the house & children to keep you occupied. I wonder if you realise the hours I spend every day thinking of you. I believe you only miss me at dinner & in bed. Isn't that so? After dinner you go off to sleep. It will be lovely cuddling together again. Fancy, only 4 weeks yesterday since I left you. I'm only shaving every other day so as to get my skin nice & smooth. It's 10 marches up to **Taunggyi** of which 7 take me to the next post office at **Thauchau**, where this will be posted & where I may get letters from you. Seven days by myself ought to give you a pretty long letter. I've still only got your precious one that I received at Port Said. By the bye, address now, direct to **Taunggyi**, Southern Shan States, Burma. Now then, there are no delays. There is a post office I believe at **Mongnai**⁴ where I shall be going, but the letters go there from **Taunggyi** so mine will be forwarded on. There is a daily post up to **Taunggyi**, but that doesn't matter to me, all I care about is the English mail.

“4.30. My man turned up about 3, but alas! with no letters, only Pioneers, so you were accordingly neglected. I know the reason why I got no letters. Your letter would be addressed to % Grindlay & would be delivered there, while the Burma letters go off at once by the special train for **Calcutta**. Never mind! Now I have one week to wait. My interpreter & khalassis leave Taunggyi on the 18th to meet me, I want the former as I want to start learning Shan. They will come down double marching, so I shall meet them in about 5 days. How I would enjoy this march with you. There is the comfort of carts & bungalows & a lot of wild jungle to go through. Then after the first two marches you get into the hills. My dear, we must do this trip together; and I will show you the places I used to sit writing to you, & instead of falling in love with the place you will say “what a dirty place” not having any romance in you. I must write to Renny⁵ as I am marching up this road. I think the only reason Longe wanted to see me for was to say he was sorry about my leave. Now I'm going to read Pioneers for a bit.

“6 pm. Now it's your turn for a bit. I got 3 Pioneers, but I mustn't read them all in one day. I see Jim Reid is selling Innisfallen up at Delhi for Rs1,200, didn't we pay Rs900 for it. I think you might write to him, Ida; because after writing pretty often it looks odd to drop him altogether. I shall be rather tired of

1 Now spelt Hlaingdet.

2 Slang term for second breakfast or lunch, sometimes applied to any light meal, originating in British India.

3 Central Burma. Latitude 20.781731°N, Longitude 97.038467°E.

4 Latitude 20.511654°N, Longitude 97.873161°E.

5 Lieut. Col. Renny-Tailyour.

my own company with no work to do by the time I get to **Taunggyi**. The bungalow lamp is rather a good one, it has no chimney, but it key in the stand winds up a fan inside which gives the necessary draft; I've seen them before. We shall have a nice lamp when we are together, but I only have candles.

“After dinner. My pretty sweetheart I adore you! A good many of the ladies I met on the road were shewing the whole of their chests, but unlike their sex in other countries, only the women showed them, those who might have well developed ones are careful to cover them up; anyhow I saw none as good as yours! Mind & don't forget to improve your one weak point before I come home. I shall although it's only 8.15. I want to start earlier tomorrow. The water is said not to be good at the next bungalow so I'm taking some on from here with me. The reason why this march up the cart road is dull is that the marches being short 3 or 4 hours at most walking & no work to do, one has to find occupation for oneself the rest of the day; so I miss you more than ever. I've made a good start with my letter. I wonder whether you still love my letters, as much as I'd use yours, do tell me. If you've got a governess & nurse, you will be able to go to bed & read my letters in bed, which is what I like doing with yours, especially the loving bits. I like to hear all your news & all about the children, but the loving parts are what I like most. I wonder whether you ever longed to be to be paying you attention & loving you, I suppose not. I'm often thinking of our meeting; it's rather nice to know the room & exactly how the furniture is arranged & the bed! Now I wonder whether a remark like that makes you blush; although you look always much younger than you are, I believe you will grow old in the ways of love & married life long long before I shall. Now goodnight my pretty darling, how I wish you were going to sleep on my shoulder!

“Jan. 17. Yemabin bungalow. I marched 10½ miles today. First five miles absolutely straight, then amongst low hills. After walking 8 miles (here I had to stop to fill my pen), I rested for a little, then struck across a short cut, a jungle path, & thought how you would have liked it. This isn't a bad little bungalow & its 500 ft higher than the last, so cooler. The next two are just the same height. I met a sergeant from **Fort Stedman** on the road & had a short talk with him. The bungalow chowkidar⁶ at the last place said of the water here was not good; so instead of having delicious drafts of cold water, I'm having it boiled. The jungle is drying up; when you see it come November it will be all green, that you will find it hotter than I do now. Wouldn't you like to have another son⁷, either? Perhaps one day you will agree to have another try; look at the Princess of Wales; only I wish you could feed them for the proper 9 months. I know you could, if you really wanted to & drank milk & eat your food properly. In the Pioneer I saw an advertisement for a nurse to look after two children aged 1½ years (that is 18 months) & 10 months. There's a jolly breeze blowing. I didn't sleep well last night; when I first begin hard walking I always get a bit constipated for a day or two & then there were cocks crowing very early in the morning. I heard a good many jungle fowl crowing, also a barking deer call, as I was on the road today. I bought a cheap gun at **Rangoon**, quite good for the jungle & if I ever have enough money I will buy a good one at home, but you know that will cost £30 or more. I hope you are not forgetting that I want the list of cheques you draw each month & don't forget any. I've got to save Rs1,500 out here for my passage home (return) & expenses on voyage; I should like to save something more to give us a fair start, but I don't think I shall; because I feel quite sure you won't live on your £50. You aren't at present living on the proceeds of the Japanese we sold out, so don't think you are doing well, if you have a balance in hand for a month or two.

“5 o'clock. I've had tea & then had written a letter to Renny, mostly of Bangalore & Survey news. I've been reading two of Marion Crawford's books I hadn't read before, “The Ralstons” about America & “Paul Patoff”; both good. Don't forget my “standards” & an occasional magazine if you buy one on a journey & send it me after you've finished it, I shall be grateful for anything. When I'm reading, I love to put my book down, close my eyes & imagine what you're doing or think of our engagement or anything else about you. I don't think you know what a romantic old chap I am & how you feel my thoughts. My cart men have just been to ask me to start earlier as the sun isn't good for their bullocks,

6 A watchman or caretaker.

7 Lisle Charles Dudley Ryder had been born on 31st August 1902.

they suggested 4 o'clock, which isn't good enough, so I said I would start earlier tomorrow. I don't mind as it is much cooler the need to walk & I always wake early; however it's rather early in the day for them to start complaints. One thing I shall alter when you are with me is about lunch. I have as chota hazri or breakfast, which ever you like to call it, a plate of porridge (not Quaker oats, sweetheart) a couple of poached eggs & a cup of cocoa; that would be all right if you; then I have some cold meat, potatoes, bread & the rest of last nights putting brought along with me. By waiting a little, I could have the potatoes heated up, but I don't bother about it, however you shall have hot potatoes, if you'll give me a kiss every day for them. What I shall do is to have two mules who will come in nearly as fast as we do with one servant to get lunch ready & the mules can carry the necessary things & also our things for a bath & change, while that suit your majesty. Now I must read a little Paul Patoff.

“After dinner. I went to bed too early last night, so tonight I'm going to stay up a little. I don't think the water here will do me harm, I filtered, boiled it & then had a sparklet, which is supposed to knock microbes on the head. I found a book in the bungalow, Hazell's Annual 10 years old, something like Whittaker's or referring rather to the events of that year 1899, which has saved me from reading much of my own books. Your pen which I write with always now is very useful; it is a great saving of time & trouble not having to dip one's pen in the ink. The last time I came down this road I didn't stop at this bungalow as I was marching with mules. You shall have a sort of Norfolk jacket khaki coat when you come with me, and short skirts; trousers, I mean breeches underneath & no white petticoats. You also will have to wear a warm vest at nights, you may see what you like. When it's cold enough for me to wear my sweater & sleep in my bag, you will have to do the same. You shall have your own sleeping bag, only using mine once a week. I love to think over these things; now there's the tub question. I use, once I've left of the bungalows, an India rubber bath, but I think we will bring a tin travelling bath are you. You are a small person, so you will not want a big one & you will look very pretty in it. That's one great advantage of India over England, that I can see you in your bath. You don't mind very much do you? I can't remember the first time I saw you in your bath. I remember the first time I took off your nightgown & little pink vest you used to wear, but as you are an old maid now, I mustn't remind you of these things; only you'll experience it over again when we meet. Tell me, is it wrong of me to think of these things. I don't think it is, do you ever think of them? I'm longing to get to **Thamakau** to get your letters, 5 marches more. I am now seventh out of 9, in my present grade, it will take some time before I officiate up, the next rise is a good one Rs300 a month. When I come back from my furlough I shall be 5th or higher is anyone unexpected retires, I hope they may; if I was 3rd I should generally be officiating up a grade. I wish I could have put all my time till I go home in camp; however going to my first 3 months leave being privilege leave on full pay, my furlough pay will come to £570 a year or £47-10 a month. Now sweet darling it's ¼ to 9, good time to go to bed & think of you. God bless you, darling, though being the very best & sweetest of wives that man ever had. How I long to kiss your pretty face.

“Jan. 18. **Pyinyoung** bungalow. 10½ miles march & a pretty one all amongst the hills & bamboo jungle. At first my khalassi took me by a short cut but we soon lost the path & had to find our way across country on to the road as best we could. The last 4 miles was alongside a nullah⁸ with a little water in it now, but in November it has a good deal. I found quite a young (*sic*) library 2 or 3 Pearson's & a Strand Magazine, so with them & my lunch time went pleasantly till my things arrived; now it's ¼ to 3 & I've had my bath & am comfortable. There is such a jolly big tin tub here. I thought of you as I sat in it, because you could put your legs straight out in front of you, I nearly could. I'm pleased to find our (*sic*) easily I get back into writing you big letters, I should love to see you with one of my letters & see whether your face brightens up like mine does when I see your dear handwriting. I'm afraid I shall not get long love letters till these of mine from camp reach you, but you know how hard it is to write on board ship. I've done 30 miles out of my march of 106 miles. It wasn't hot today, as there was a good deal of shade. I shall have to take two of your rhubarb pills tonight. One gets good oranges in Burma, so it's a good plan to have plenty with me, I always have one with my lunch. Can you iron clothes, if not, I wish you would learn from someone. You are a dear sweet darling to have given me four such

8 A ravine or gully, especially in south Asia.

sweet children, Ida; you might say the same to me, because you know if I'd listened to you really should have had none.

“5.30. Dear heart I have spent the afternoon reading a trashy novel & finished it, however now I devote myself to you. I'm going to have a tin of army ration tonight for a treat. I've only one more bungalow low down, then I get to **Wetpuyet** (?) which is 2,800 ft & **Kalaw** 4,200, and it will be quite cold. I think, Ida, dearie, we've done the right thing in having our little family while we are young, and while I had to be travelling about, now I feel more & more I don't want anything to keep us apart. I may of course go once or twice on service but barring that we must always be together & now I want to look ahead & save as much as we can, so that we can start our children well in live (*sic*). I know **Margaret** will make a most sweet wife. I heard from Capt. Pirie. He is at **Myingyan** the other side of **Thazi** & his wife & baby up to **Mayungo**. I shall probably arrange to travel over to **Madras** with him if we can arrange it. I want to stay out here as long as possible so, because I want to save money & I also loathe civilised places like **Bangalore** without you. I haven't got all my information about the fellows on leave, but as far as I can see the very latest I can be kept is till early in August, possibly earlier. One or two fellows come back from leave earlier, but then one or two may go sick, but in August 4 fellows come back; at least they really arrive in November; but then as my first three months are privilege leave, I can go 3 months before my substitute comes back; so in counting the days now I count till August to be quite safe. Now then comes the question as to how much leave to take. I shall have then 3 months privilege & 1 year & five months furlough, i.e. 1 year & 8 months. I shall of course apply for the whole lot, it is easy to cancel some afterwards, but not easy to get an extension; this of course we shall have plenty of time to talk over after I get home. You will like to hear the bells on the bullocks necks on this road, besides the carts there are lots of bullock caravans & you can hear their bells for miles away. I slept better last night but not quite like a log yet. I hope my darling you are quite well yourself. I've got rather a bubbly pipe which is disturbing my thoughts, so I'll knock off for a bit.

“After dinner. As soon as the sun goes down it gets quite cold & I'm glad of my sleeping bag at nights. Two rhubarbs have just gone down the red lane. I saw a small squirrel today not spotted like the Indian, but all grey; and as one walks along the whole jungle is alive with the cooing of doves & the chattering of parrots, the common green sort. I'm afraid my friends the rhubarbs will delay me on the march tomorrow. I have about the 11 miles to do. I'm so sorry you don't like onions, Ida, because Spanish onions are such a useful thing to take into camp with one; perhaps when you've got nothing else, you will enjoy them. There is one thing that all the first 4 months of camping in the Shan hills, certainly till the middle of March the climate is so good that I think you would have an appetite. Do you know now I've tried oatmeal again, I prefer it to Quaker oats really, it isn't so soppy; but we will bring Quaker oats too. There is one advantage of having a head quarters camp where one must be at least 10 days in the month, that it is easy to take plenty of stores there & at the end of the season whatever is over, anyone in Taunggyi is only too delighted to take off one's hands. If these new unsweetened milks are a great thing; one really wouldn't know one was taking tinned milk. “Ideal” is my brand. Of course it doesn't keep fresh for days like the others but I finish a tin in 3 days, & it lasts that time all right. Perhaps my interpreter coming down the road may bring on some letters from **Thamakau**, but I hardly think so; two mails come from **Calcutta** weekly, one the English mail, the other the mutton (?) mail; perhaps you addressed to Bangalore, that wouldn't delay the letter too much. It's a month today since I left you sweetheart, it brings tears to my eyes to think of our parting, please God to bring us together again soon & not be parted for years & years. I'm sticking to my page a day & now it's time the bed, goodnight you sweet darling. God bless you, take care of the chicks.

“Jan. 19. By Jove it was cold last night. I had to get out for one thing & then I put on my sweater & then when I was called I put my nose under my sleeping bag & refused to get up; it was a nasty foggy & you would have been simply mad to sleep in sheets, I should have hauled you out & tucked you into my bag. I didn't get warm for a couple of miles or so, but was sweating freely when I got in here, **Nampandet**⁹. They have built a new bungalow since I've been here, a great improvement on the old

⁹ Latitude 20°.722222 N; Longitude 96°.465556 E.

one. No eggs to be bought here, so I'll have to do without them. My carts got in about 1, I got in at 10. Now it's 3 o'clock & I've just finished my bath & shave. As I walk along the road I think of you & the difference things that will have to be altered when you are with me. There were some magazines in the bungalow which kept me occupied till my things came. My piles had effect, thank you, just right. I think I shall meet my interpreter & Khalassis tomorrow; it is a short march 8½ miles, but a good deal up hill, if I recollect right. You will have to keep the store book when you are with me, that is a very important thing, to keep a record of each tin when it is opened, so that one can see how long things are lasting; I'll shew you how I do it. I hope we shall have the bungalows to ourselves, because the walls between the rooms are only matching & one can hear every word that is said in the next room. I had a very funny dream. I suddenly found myself appointed as adjutant to the Madras Sappers on Rs850 a month; when I objected, I was told that I must take it, but that if could persuade you to have two more sons, during the five years, I should then be made Commandant for five years on 1800/- a month. This was all told to both of us by the General with all his staff listening to what you would say I woke up before you had decided. There is a young river here making quite a noise; I don't sleep half so well when I'm away from you as when you're with me. It's a lovely feeling to know there's a dear little wife sleeping in your arms or on your shoulder. I think I'm taking some of the fat off myself, you will be glad to hear.

“6 o'clock. I have written to Father & an official. Then as it got dusk I sat at the window looking down the valley, thinking daydreams of you, my sweet. Only 3 more marches to the Post Office at **Thamakau**, how I'm longing to get there; it's such ages since I heard of you. I wonder so much if you have got a governess or nurse. Start looking out for a cook in plenty of time Ida, if Mrs Barker leaves you. The arrangement of having Mr and Mrs Barker is an expensive one, so I shall not be sorry when it comes to an end. I feel tired at this evening, sweetheart, I'll go on after dinner.

“After dinner. What a wonderful thing love is, sweetheart. After dinner I lay in a long chair with a cheroot thinking of you. I wondered whether you were thinking of me. You've got to add 6¼ hours to your time, to think of what I'm doing; so now as it is 8 o'clock with me, it's not quite 2 in the afternoon & you're all sitting down at lunch. I can see you, because I know the room. I wonder which end you sit at. How is the greenhouse getting on & what about the bulbs. I wonder when you will find time to wade all through this long letter. Darling, how I long to kiss your pretty face & give you a good hug. You will have to undergo a lot of kissing when I come home. The frogs in the stream are making such a noise, croaking away. I hope you're getting **Violet** in to order again. I enjoy my sparklets very much. I had a great dinner tonight because I opened a tin of pears, they are very good, we shall take a lot with us. I have brought 11 boxes of stores with me; I'm afraid to say how many you & I will want together, but certainly 25. I'm feeling very fit & well, the walking is doing the good, but I feel very, very lonely, old girlie. How you can think that these separations are worse for you than for me, I can't think. I see you in our nice house with the children round you, in a nice town, by the sea &c. &c¹⁰. & where am I, all by myself in a lonely dak bungalow without a soul to talk to; my only companion is this letter & your dear photo & and because before we parted I had to do the comforting, with my own heart nearly breaking you think I don't mind. Sweetheart, darling, I loathe these separations, so be doubly sweet to me in all sorts of little ways when I come home. Now goodnight, and away I go to my lonely bed & have a good think of you before I go to sleep. Kisses all over you.

“Jan. 20. The march today was a good deal of the hill, but there are a lot of short cuts made it shorter; however when I got to the bungalow, I found it deserted & found that a new one was built two miles further on up hill. All this up hill made me sweat, so when I got him I took off my things & hung them out to dry, & put on another show at & a towel round my waist. Presently when my things were just on dry, a man with some mules turned up & said a mem-sahib was coming so I had to jump into my clothes again. It turned out to be Mrs Grant, the wife of the V.C. man, you remember him in **Bangalore**, she only stopped till about 3 & then went on downhill; she talked enough for a dozen, told me all about herself, Grant was her second husband is & I should fancy she had money, she looked about 35 or 40. This put me back with my bath &c. so now it's ½ past 5 before I can get to your letter.

¹⁰ This would be Murhill House, Prideaux Road, Eastbourne, I think.

Its turning pretty cold too. Last night I thought it was going to be cold so went to bed with my sweater on, but had to take it off, however I think tonight I shall want it. I got hold of rather a good book, "The Old Dominion" about America 200 years ago, he told settlers Read Indians &c. I also found she Ladies paper with fashions &c. from which I see that the latest style of stays is besides the straight front. I suppose to push them up. Do you remember the American girl on the ship as we went home with the straight fronted stays, how funny it looked; like all fashions till one gets accustomed to it. Whenever I meet any woman to talk to them that for a bit I always think to myself how far superior you are to them. Mrs Grant was very jolly to talk to, rattled on, she smokes cigarettes! Thanks! What men would call a good sort! This is a new bungalow & a very nice one too, and in a much better situation than the old one. I think on my way down I shall stop here or at **Kalaw** till the last moment and then double march down, the rest of the way. No signs of my Khalassis or Interpreter. I daresay they haven't got beyond **Taunggyi**. I see the reward for Lower Standard Shan is Rs1,000, but I couldn't learn enough this year to pass. I only wish I could. Only two more marches to the post office, the day after tomorrow; by Jove, how disappointed I shall be if there is no letter from you.

"After dinner. 8 o'clock. I wish I could keep out of bed till about 10, going to bed so soon after dinner I'm sure is the reason why I want to go 1 thing every night about 3 or 4 o'clock. I shall snuggle into my sleeping bag all right tonight. How I do love & adore you, my darling. I'm sure no one has a husband who loves their wife as I love you nor has anyone such a darling wife & sweetheart as I have. Goodnight, my pet.

"Jan. 21. It was a pretty march today uphill; however my foot was hurting very much. When I got here, **Kalaw**, I found Capt. and Mrs Orman halted. He is a cousin of Col. Longe's, only lately married last June, I think & I should say she is about 4 months gone. As they march tomorrow we shall probably do two marches together. Then my 4 Khalassis sent by Mr Doran turned up & also an interpreter & a pony. This is really a most delightful spot, over 4000 ft & fir trees all round. I think we must halt a day here as we come up. I got a letter from Mr Doran telling me about the marches; it is five good marches to **Mongnai** from **Taunggyi** & then 4 or 5 on beyond to this camp. The Ormans seem pleasant, she is rather uninteresting but I'd much sooner be alone. I'm not sorry to have a pony on account of my poor foot; it's the side of the foot that hurts, I must have twisted it. Nobody to sympathise & love me & it does hurt when I walk. You can imagine I am excited in getting to **Thamakau** tomorrow for my dak¹¹. Some elephants have just gone along the road with a sweet little baby elephant like a small pony; tell **Margaret & Enid**. The air here is delightful quite (*si*) in the hills. This is the place that ought to have been made the hill station of Burma. There's quite a flat valley of feels in front of me with little hills round with pine trees on them. There won't be anyone in **Taunggyi** as there are races on at **Fort Stedman**. The sun is shining in at my window so I must vacate my table for a bit.

"Jan. 22. So disappointed, no letters here, but I must post this at once. My very fondest love darling & heaps of kisses from Your ever adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

"Love & kisses to the dear chicks."

24th January, to Ida: "My own darling sweetheart, Can you imagine what a disappointment it was to get no letters from you (or anyone else) at **Thamakau**. I then had just to scribble off the end of my letter to catch the post. Yesterday I marched to **Heho** (?) & Today to this place **Sinhé**. The Ormans left my road about 4 miles short of this bungalow. Curiously enough I found that she was a Miss Norton, her father's second wife was Mrs Johnson's & Mrs Allen's sister; also Capt Orman was at **Bedford** & his mother lives in Kimbolton Road. Very soon after I got in here a jungle fire sprung up, such roaring. It came quite close to the bungalow, so everyone got ready to fight it, the chowkidar on the roof with buckets of water, but it swept by & didn't touch us, it was a fine sight though. My foot is no better, I have to ride the hold March & now I'm sitting with cold water bandages on. It is most unfortunate. Tomorrow I get to **Taunggyi** & if I don't get a dak there I don't know what I shall do. Not getting letters from you at **Thamakau** when I so fully counted on them, has rather put me out for writing

¹¹ A Hindi word for "mail"; also used for a British colonial postal and passenger transport service in India.

humour.

6 o'clock. My foot is such a nuisance, I can't go for an evening stroll. I've got in nicely bandaged up with the help of a putti. I shall enjoy going down this road better than going up as I shall feel I'm getting nearer you. I feel dull & low spirited, I am absolutely counting on getting one mail if not two at **Taunggyi**. This is almost as bad as being in China for not getting letters. I know it's not your fault, but some postmaster is playing the ass with my letters. My march tomorrow is mostly uphill. I shall halt one day at **Taunggyi** to give my foot a rest & also to rearrange my things and then start off again. I shall be quite glad to get to my headquarters camp, halt of a bit & have some work to do. I'm afraid you will have a short & stupid letter this week, but if I can march out with a letter or two of yours in my pocket I shall feel more inspired. I think I shall manage to send in a mail every week all right, except now & again while I'm inspecting. I don't think this cook will do for us when we are together, he cannot make decent scones. There is a fine big lamp here, which has just been lit & writings up things a bit. This bungalow is in the **Fort Stedman** valley with **Taunggyi** on the hills above.

Jan. 25. I got up to **Taunggyi** pretty early & you can imagine my distress to find letters but none from you. I met Gordon, one of these civilians here & he took me off to breakfast, then I spent the day arranged in my things for mule loads. In the evening I went to the little club & you can't imagine my delight to find two letters from you. Thanks very much for the Standards they will come in nicely for my march out. Darling, how I devoured your letters. They were not very long, but still I'm so happy with them. I am so glad that you have a good nurse & I do hope she will stay, but about the governess, Ida, if she is not satisfactory, do get another one quick. I do want the children to settle down with one who is a lady. Their education gets so behind hand with changes. However I have full confidence in you, sweetheart. I'm so glad you like the piano, it probably is only a little damaged, but please darling, do practise your singing and playing. I do so want you to keep it up. Please, please do. Thank **Margaret** very much for her letter. Darling you write very sweetly about my not getting a C. I. G. As long as you think highly of me, I don't mind what other people think. I'm in a very nice bungalow, the circuit house. I only halt here tomorrow. I could get off tomorrow but I want a day's rest, and to have a little time to write to you. I heard from **Mary**. How sad for poor **Kitty**. Darling don't you feel how good God has been to us, our four children all born strong & fine children. Mrs Ainslie has a daughter born

Jan. 7. You evidently posted your letter late the first mail. You don't mention getting my letter from Marseilles. I hope you did. You darling I am so glad you are having a rest. We, especially you did have rather a rough time those last 2 or 3 months. It does seem so strange to me when you write of the baby as he; I can't quite realise yet that we have a son. How kind of **Aunt Mary**¹² & Ethel to treat the children to the Pantomime, how I should have loved to have gone with them. Sweetheart and I've just read your letters through for the 3rd time, and I shall take them to bed with me. You darling, to have such a sweet wife as you is quite reward enough for me. I shall have to make these letters last a long time. It will take me 10 days to get to my camp & your next letter will follow a week later at the earliest. You ended your last in an atmosphere of "flu". I'm afraid you'll all have a turn of it. **Lisle** seems putting on satisfactory weight, I'm so glad. Ida, if we have a nice & governance, the latter must be a good deal with us, so to hunt about & get a really nice one, it is worth while. No need to put, In charge 11 & 21 Parties, on your letters darling, Survey of India is enough. I'm rumbling a good deal, but I have kept very well so far. Of course, it's a healthier time of year to come up than November which is just after the rains. I had to go through my store boxes to arrange them & make a list of what was in each box. This place has grown wonderfully since I was here, it's now like a regular hill station. I shall probably meet one or two people while I'm out in camp. Darling I love to think each evening that I'm a date nearer you. How I'm longing for a good hug from you, and something more if you're not too much of an old maid.

"Jan. 26. I had a good night tonight by keeping all the windows closed I managed to collect a good fug! Then I enjoyed your letters over my chota hazri¹³, after which I got up & am writing with two photos of you in front of me. Your last letter was dated Jan. 2. so they come here in 23 days, but out in camp it

12 Ida's father's sister Mary Ann Grigg 1838-1922.

will take a month to get them. I examined all the post marks on your letters & now I see why you missed the first mail, because you posted on bank holiday, when the posts are like Sunday, you old duffer! Don't do it again. We are getting to the end of January, how I long for the months to pass to our happy meeting. Do you still feel sleepy after dinner, now that you can have good nights. How I wish we could have had our last fortnight without being disturbed by the dear baby boy. Do you ever feel any inclination to have another? Here I am wandering about jungles & yet my idea of happiness would be to live in a country manor house or vicarage, with you having a baby every 18 months or so. How curious it is that while you get in the family way as easily as anyone that you can't feed the babies. I'm quite certain you could easily for 9 months each time if you had eaten your food properly & drunk plenty of milk. I wonder whether **Hugh & Kittie**¹⁴ will have another try now. I should think **Manipur** would be a quiet sort of place, rather suitable for that sort of thing.

“11 pm. Darling I (??) out so have no time for more. Have to finish my packing before I go to bed. God bless you. Dearest, you shall have a good long letter next week but I may miss a mail. Heaps of love & kisses all over you. For ever Your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

“Love & kisses to the darling 4.”

13th February, to Ida: “My own darling sweetheart, I left **Mongpan** yesterday & had a very tiring march. Firstly, as always happens with a new start off. It was 8.30 before I got off, & I got into camp, a small jungle village at 3.30, my mules at 4.30. By the time I had had tea & my bath I was too tired to write. One of my Khalassis¹⁵ never turned up, however he did this morning & I sent him back. Today I had much the same sort of march. I got off at 7 & walked through interminable trees & bamboos with hardly any leaves on, finally I got in at 2 & my mules at 3.30. Of course if you were with me, we shouldn't be doing such a long marches. I reach **Kengtawng** tomorrow in 3 marches from **Mongpan**, what is ordinarily done in 4. I have no object in making short marches, the day passes more quickly when it is fully occupied, however I'm pretty tired, I walked all the day today. I do this on purpose, for exercise & also to get fit, so that when I examine the Surveyors work, which means walking, I can do it all right. I'm using my tent for the first time. It was one Major Longe sent me out to **Peking** which I never used. It has no bathroom otherwise it's a nice little tent. I feel much more alone with you & my letter in a tent than anywhere else. I think I shall not get on very far with this letter tonight, I'm too tired. I'm so sorry darling for I do love sending you as long a letter as possible. When we are together we shall have the great advantage of using the good road to **Keng Tung**¹⁶, for at least two seasons; perhaps you will have had enough of camping by then. I warn you it's very Robinson Crusoe-ish sort of camping. The different questions that prevent themselves as to how you will manage solve themselves gradually. For instance Mr Doran makes to Khalassis carry his bath & in it he puts breakable things, lamps, sparklet bottle &c. There is a sweeper with the headquarters, so that question is all right. Then there is a carpenter, who can knock up tables & shelves. The only thing I cannot think how to arrange is your washing each month! There is no dhobi¹⁷ in the party, but you won't be very uncomfortable & anyhow if you meet your difficulties cheerfully & don't go noticing every little thing that is not quite right we shall do very well. Now sweetheart much as I adore you and I'm too tired to write more.

“Feb. 14. I hadn't a long march today, started at 6.45 & got in at 10.15, an easy walk; but I felt rather out of sorts, just bilious or something, maybe the son, so as my tongue is dirty, I've taken some pills. Then I lay down for a couple of hours. I found out a way to send this letter in to **Sai-kaw**, a post office on the **Keng Tung** road & only a march from here. I don't think I'm often miss a chance of getting a letter to you. There is a strong wind blowing, a regular hot weather wind bringing up the haze. This is

13 Hindi: a light meal eaten very early in the morning.

14 Kitty, Ida's sister, married Hugh Wake in 1899.

15 An Arabic word meaning dockyard worker or in Malabar a launcher of boats.

16 Latitude 21.291667°N, Longitude 99.608333°E

17 A caste group in India reputed to specialise in washing clothes.

where Mr Doran had to his headquarters last year & not at all a bad place. How you will enjoy the wild flowering shrubs in the jungle when we're together. It's getting rapidly hotter, as I'm sitting outside in vest & trousers. Tomorrow I strike east towards the **Salween**, but it's a long march to do it in one day & cross the same afternoon. Just written to **Harry** & Renny & then went out & shot 4 green pigeon; they make a change in one's food, & that's about all that can be said, perhaps you will like them. I've put on my shirt & then my coat. I think the medicine is going to act; at least I got a little pain. Thank you I'm better, but still I feel "Chup" (?) & wish are for your soothing hand on my forehead. I shall be all right tomorrow. Today you are my Valentine, you would never think of these things. With a little encouragement I could be sick, so you can imagine I am writing under difficulties. I can only hear of 2 men who want leave so that I don't think there will be the least doubt about my getting my leave in August. I shall come home through the monsoon. I've been thinking things out & I don't think we should gain much by coming out direct to **Rangoon**, because coming through **Bangalore** I begin to draw pay from the daily I reach Bangalore, coming straight to **Rangoon**, I begin from **Rangoon**; but I will write to all the shipping agents & see. I think this Swan Pen doesn't improve my handwriting, do you? I hope you will soon get a good governess, because the children make no progress with constant changes. That is one reason why a school is so much better.

"After dinner. I made, wisely, a frugal meal, & struck at "anchovy egg" & cabinet pudding. I must get on a bit with my Shan, but it is quite impossible to make any progress marching & especially with my Interpreter who doesn't take the slightest interest in my learning Shan. I have arranged for my dak to be sent out from **Mongpan** but I can't hope to get it for some days yet, as it will only reach **Mongpan** on the 18th. Darling pet, how I wish I could help you more than I have been able to. You've had all the anxiety of bringing up the children, but they are darlings & you the darlingest of the lot. God bless you, my pet. Heaps of love & kisses of a very passionate sought from Your adoring lover & husband.

"Those poor chicks, I must write to them more often, but read them out bits of my letters & kiss them all."

27th January, to Ida: "My own sweet darling, Here I am one march out of **Taunggyi**. It was an easy March, a good road, 12 miles & generally slightly downhill. My thought was a bit better so I walked 3 or 4 miles. There is a nice little bungalow here on rising ground, new since I was here. My mules came in ¼ hour after I did except one who chucked his load & broke one of my store boxes, unluckily 1 bottle of whiskey was smashed. I'm going to start on learning Shan today with my Interpreter, but I shan't make real progress till I get a good man. I must teach myself the alphabet, but that won't take more than a few days. It will give me something to do. It was fairly hot before I got in, as I didn't get off till after 9. One never does the first day, it's a long job arranging the loads just to balance. My personal kit consists of my roll of bedding, Gladstone bag, small tin box & despatch box, but you will be allowed a little more than that. I had my first bath in my india rubber bath, it was not very comfortable. I don't suppose I shall have my sort of excitement on this march. The first 4 marches room the **Keng Tung** road which I know.

"After dinner. I got hold of my interpreter & had a good go in at Shan, & got quite interested in it. I found he knew more Shan than I thought, so I started learning some simple sentences & shall take any opportunity of spouting them on the road. I'm getting on with the alphabet, the consonants are easy enough but the vowels vary according to the consonants in front of them, which is a nuisance. Now it's nearly ½ past 8.

"Jan. 28. Dear heart, this is cheerful. I got up early & had breakfast & everything was packed & then the mules couldn't be found. The mule drivers are out hunting for them & the general opinion is that they have calmly walked back to **Taunggyi**, in which case I shall have to halt here today. If you were here I shouldn't mind two pence in fact read rather enjoy it, not by myself I hate a halt. I've been doing some more Shan, and then I thought I might as well have some of my things unpacked. Sweetheart how I wish we could have another son, don't you. Our little man will be so lonely at school; two boys like **Wilfred** & myself or **Tommy** & **Harry** have such a good time. When I come home **Lisle** will be

nearly a year old, so if he did have a brother, there would be a year & 9 months between them, wouldn't there. I wonder whether you ever think of this. How I wish we could have children without being separated, because I'm afraid the expense would not stop me once I had you in my arms. It's only that dreadful separation, because if I came home with 18 months leave & if you were very keen on another son; he would only be nine months old when my leave was up; and we couldn't bring him out because he certainly couldn't take a baby out camping with us. You write & tell me what you think, you needn't be shy, because after all I am your husband. This is an excellent bungalow & indoor is it's very jolly & cool. How I wish you were here. What a pity **Violet** wasn't a boy, then we'd have been all right. However one can't have every thing & I have the very sweetest darling of a wife, who has given me 3 dear little girls, all sweet & pretty & a fine little son, so I haven't much to grumble at. I'd better think of saving money instead of thinking of another son, but somehow when I look into your eyes I think of something else & there's no doubt I do adore you extra, when you are in the family way & this time as soon as you quickened you were perfectly sweet; while you have your morning sickness on you are not quite such a darling! I think I must do a double march tomorrow to make up for lost time. It doesn't really matter two straws when I get out to the party, they are going on all right with Mr Doran. I only want the days to pass quickly & they will pass quicker when I have work to do. I want to stay out in camp as long as possible; on other occasions when I was hurrying back to you in India I used to stop work as early as side decently could.

“Jan. 29. 11 of my 12 mules turned up about 11 o'clock, so after waiting a bit longer I then decided to go on leaving my Interpreter to bring on the other load in a cart; however tying up the loads took a long time as there was only one mule driver; the other two were still searching for the missing mule. Finally we started a bit after one & I got into **Htamsan** the next stage at 5; the mules $\frac{1}{2}$ An hour later & the cart at night some time. Last night was very cold, we were up in the hills & the bungalow had only matting walls which don't keep out the cold. Today I came 13 miles mostly down hill into a valley, **Mongpaung**, where there is a very nice bungalow; so far I have had a Road, now however I leave it. I remember this place when I was here last, we had to afford the river & hurt rather than exciting time, now there is a fine bridge. Col Woodthorpe, Capt Daly of the 4th Burma, both now dead. Walker & myself were together we went to a Pwé¹⁸ a Burmese theatrical performance in the Tsawbwa's¹⁹ house, do you remember my telling you he had two daughters, he wanted very much to marry to some English officer. I wonder what has become of them. As I walked along the first march of march, the first 3 miles I was on the shady side of the hills & it was delightful. I thought to myself how we have to sacrifice ourselves to the children; if you hadn't gone & had another baby, we could have been together honeymooning all this time; so I thought to myself no more babies are as & now when I sit looking at your photograph I think to myself how I should love to have another son, and to see you once more at last in the family way. Can you reconcile these two very opposite ideas & do you ever have the second one yourself? One of my mulemen has come in the other has stayed behind to bring on the missing mule if he can find him. I've got a hills to climb tomorrow, however going to my foot I shall probably ride up most of it. I must do some Shan now. However on calling for my Interpreter I was told he had fever, so I can't do much Shan by myself.

“Darling old girlie I wonder if you realise how much my daily letter to you is & how I treasure & love your letters. I've a good long time to wait before I get another though. The weekly mail to **Mongnai** leaves **Taunggyi** on a Friday & as the English mail comes in on a Sunday, my letters wait 5 days at **Taunggyi**, so the next mail won't leave **Taunggyi** till Feb. 6. & I can't get that till Feb. 13 at the earliest so you see I have another 15 days to wait. I must get one of my Khalassis to cut my hair soon. I bought myself a pair of hair cutting scissors. I wish you were here to cut my hair for me. When we are together out here, sweetheart, I shall be continually saying to you; that's where I sat writing to you or that's

¹⁸ A Pwé is a show which may take many forms but generally focuses on some sort of performance involving various mixtures of drama, dance, music and song.

¹⁹ Tsawbwa or Sawbwa was a royal title used by rulers of the Mong of the Shan States of Burma.

where I sat thinking of you. During our separations you don't have to suffer all alone, old girlie. Although you miss me, you at least have the children with you. At the place we shall make our headquarters, I shall have a shed built of bamboo & thatch, for a house; even if one sleeps in a tent it is nice to have a thatch overhead during the day, especially when it gets hot. It is quite pleasant till the end of February, then March begins to get hot & April is hot, but then we would try & move up into hills somewhere. In fact you darling, I think continually of our being together out here. I must say I think it would be wiser to come out say in November next year, chucking the last 6 months of our house, so as to be able to go direct into camp. I will leave all campaign things packed together, so that they can be either left at **Mandalay** when I go over to **Bangalore** or if I'd take them to **Bangalore**, packed there & then they can be taken over & left at **Rangoon** till we call for them. In that case my best plan would be when I come home to go down to **Colombo** & take a Bibby boat, so that we can come out in one direct to **Rangoon** to avoid the Railway journey across India & the beastly steamer from Madras to **Rangoon**. They have 3 big boats the size of the Arcadia, and we can easily manage to come by one of them. Everyone says they are most comfortable.

“After dinner. I had a glass of Madeira tonight. Port, of course, is no use to take into camp, but Madeira travels very well & you & I were often drink a glass together when in camp. In Yünnan I used to get excellent fresh walnuts, but I have to do without that here. I adore you so much at all times that I know you don't mind being adored a little bit extra on these occasions. These bungalows have only one bed, Ida. When we are in tents, and using camp beds, I don't know quite how we shall manage because I don't think I should now have the face to have the bed next morning broken as well so often happening when we were first married. There is no doubt my letters to you cannot be handed down to our grandchildren!²⁰ How happy I should be if you were here, I know I'm selfish but I do long for a time when I can take you away into camp & have you all to myself, not even with the children, because they require your time. & I long to be back in the old times in **Kaugoa** (?) when we were just you & I together. It's never that in a station, because you always have 2 or 3 men running after you & in spite of of your good resolutions, I'm afraid it will be just the same next time. It's only 8 o'clock & yet I feel quite tired enough to go to bed, and I always wake up at 3 am. for one thing, which is a business, because I have to walk down the stairs & outside. It won't be cold tonight because this place is in a valley & also because all the walls are plank & don't let in the air. I really think my foot is better. I've had it hurting, real hurting for 9 days, so I'm getting a bit tired of it. No bungalow tomorrow, so I think I have to pitch my tent & then I have two long marches 18 or 19 miles into **Mongnai**, so you won't get so much letter from me those two days. I wish now I had brought with me just an ordinary lamp in a box, it is so much more cheerful. I have two candle sticks but they give very poor light compared with a lamp, never mind, we will have a lamp when we are together. It doesn't so much matter in a small tent, but in one of these bungalows (they mostly have lamps) or in a *zayat*²¹ which is the sort of place one puts up in a village it is very dismal with only candles. I'm glad I made the journey up to **Taunggyi** without fever; I think once in the Shan hills, & careful about water there is no reason why one should get fever, except perhaps the last month when one may get it from the heat or sun. Darling pet, you're the bright sunshine of my life, without you I should have grown up a very dull old chap, but you've twined yourself round my heart till I think of nothing but you all day. God bless you, darling, for all you have done to make my life happy. My whole happiness is centred in you; much as I love my children, darling & you know how fond I am of them, I don't love them one quarter, all put together, of what I love you, so put that in your pipe & go to bed, as I do, thinking & dreaming of you. I had an awful dream of my return home last night. I came into the drawing room, **Margaret** was drawing an animal for **Violet**, & only said “oh, there's father,” & went on with her drawing & you didn't want me to kiss you & when I asked you why, you said you met someone you loved better than you did me, just then the front door bell (*rang*) & you said, “there he is”, so I went out to the front door & met the man

²⁰ But they were!

²¹ A building found in almost every Burmese village. It serves primarily as a shelter for travellers, at the same time, is also an assembly place for religious occasions as well as meeting for the villagers to discuss the needs and plans of the village.

& kicked him down the steps, he fell & broke his neck & I was had at the murder. Mrs Pierson who was coming up her steps was the principal witness against me. So you see, don't flirt, though who there is for you to flirt with in **Eastbourne**, goodness only knows. Goodnight, darling.

“Jan. 30. 2½ hours uphill & then 2 hours down. The latter part very steep. I came by the old steep path, but there is a much better one, rather round about. No bungalow here only a *zayat*, which will I fancy be rather cold tonight. This morning there was a dense fog, as there always is where there is a river. Here I am in a large plain covered with long grass. It's 6 o'clock, so I've got to my letter late, but I did and hours Shan first, so feel good. I don't feel as if I was making very much progress. My foot is much the same, thank you. I can walk a fair amount, but it still hurts & I've had it for 10 days now. I wonder if I shall get nice long letters from you, now that I've got into good form & send you long letters. Don't forget my writing is very small, so I get a lot into a page. I've got a long march tomorrow; really a double march, but it would make two very short ones. I believe there are missionaries at **Mongnai**, I think I shall go & see them if they are near to get some tips on learning Shan. If you were here we would pitch tents, because this shared is rather too public for a lady to have her bath in, but there is a very nice grove of trees to camp in. Dear heart, how I wish you were here I shouldn't feel so cold at nights, you are so nice & warm. Oh! my dear, I had another awful dream about you; this time it had a little grain of truth in it, because it was all about your nagging. I could do nothing right; so finally I walked out of the house. I love you all the same, darling, but sometimes I have wished you wouldn't go for me quite so much; because as I grow older my temper doesn't get better. I'm pretty tired although I rode up all the hill; if my foot had been all right I should have walked & had a jolly good sweat. I wish we had a camp bed strong enough to be quite sure of holding us both, but we should always have the two beds got ready & rumple up the unused one next morning, *dekhne kiwasti!* I've ordered curry for dinner tonight. So far I have the remains of vegetables that I got in **Taunggyi**. Did I tell you I had some strawberries there. I wonder whether the very plain living in camp will suit you, it does me, I never feel better. One very useful thing we will bring out is a mincing machine, particularly when it gets hot it is so difficult to get chickens tender. I suppose I must bring some biscuits are you, I only have a very few for myself. If you can manage on your £50 a month, sweetheart I shall be able to save enough for my return ticket. Well I'm in **Bangalore** I don't see how I can save anything. I shall draw about Rs1,100 a month & send home Rs750, that only leaves me Rs350, a staff corps subalterns pay. Now for a little more Shan.

“After dinner. I hope now you have your governess & nurse, Ida. Darling you are looking to the housekeeping & saving as much as you can; because really, sweetheart you've got a large establishment now to run your family & house than ever your mother had. I hope if you are keeping Ada on as a parlour maid you have taken (*her*) off temporarily wages & onto permanent. I'm afraid you think I fuss, but oh! how I do hate to see our money gradually growing less, but I adore you, anyhow. I hope I won't dream like I have the last two nights or if I do dream of you, I wish it would be of you in your most loving mood. Do you really think you would like to come out camping with me; of course to me it will make all the difference having you, but won't you find it dull with nobody but me to talk to? I'm afraid I shall not learn much Shan with you with me. I shall prefer love making. I wonder if you could remember a certain afternoon not far from **Dharmasala** with our camp on the hillside, we strolled up the hill amongst fir trees & sat on the grass & spooned (?). Probably you've forgotten. I've been sitting back in my chair thinking of you. It's 8 o'clock & home jolly tired & would like to go to bed. I think the hot weather marching will suit me. Going to bed so early, getting up at 3.30 will not be too early. Goodnight my pet I adore you & love you so remind you have a pretty figure when we meet ask Dr Colgate what to do!

“I've just written a letter to **Una & Mary**²². I wonder whether **Wilfred & Tempé**²³ we'll have another try! It's a great mistake for a girl to marry so late as she did. They always have a bad time with their confinements. Wilfred said he wouldn't be out of debt was some months owing to have a call in

22 His older sisters.

23 His older brother had married on 22nd August 1901. Joan was born to them 15th October 1902.

specialists, so she must have been pretty bad. They won't find it so easy having a son. You are a perfect darling do have given me one. Here's a most loving hug to you. Now I must really go to bed, it's half-past 8 & you know I take 5 minutes to go to bed.

“Jan. 31. My first thought on writing that is hurrah! January is at an end, the best bit of news I've heard in a long time. I started writing to you after dinner. To begin with I had a long march, level all the way except for a short up & down through rocky hills. I had some excitement at the beginning. Irud (?) 4 deer, all does, quite close 50 yards away. Then I missed a snipe & shot 3 green pigeons, the latter sitting in a tree. I think you can understand how I can't become a decent shot in this country, one shot now & again & then I miss. I had lunch under a tree & then brought in about ½ past 1, mules in act 3. A nice little bungalow here to move furniture & these steps upstairs are very broken down. I've found all (*sic*) that the dak reaches **Mongnai** on Mondays & leaves on Thursdays for **Taunggyi**; then we have men coming to & fro from our camp, doing the distance to **Mongnai** in two days. It was bazaar day here, so I strolled through but nothing to see, however I think you will be very interested to see the different kits the people wear. It's curious that with Chinese, Shans & Burmese it's almost impossible to tell when a woman is in the family way, owing to the way they have arranged their skirts. My foot, (you never ask after it) is just the same thank you. I walk & ride a mile or two alternately & I have to limp when I walk, otherwise I'm feeling very well, but I don't enjoy the marches as I would if my foot was all right. I had rather (*sic*) indigestion during dinner, had to unbutton two buttons of my trousers & not have any pudding. You know you are generally like that after dinner, currently you've nothing you can unbutton to ease your swollen tummy. My third mule driver has just turned up, as he couldn't find the missing mule he brought another out from **Taunggyi**. Three men now to load up & tie up the loads is much better. It's not 8 o'clock & here I am quite ready to go to bed. Then I'm quite regular, this morning I was out at ½ past 4 for one thing & then I took a long time to go to sleep again & had just got to sleep when I had to get up very reluctantly. I'm longing to have my hair cut; it's now just as you like it. While I'm in camp I have it cut short all over, a regular crophead. As usual I've been sitting back in my chair & thinking of you. What a darling you are. I meant to have written **Margaret** a little letter, but she must wait till I've reached my headquarters camp & have more time. I've done no Shan today, but I fired off several sentences at men I met on the road, and they always understood me. Sweetheart I want you to be always very responsive to my love, you know, sometimes you're not. We've been ten years married & I'm more in love with you every year. Tomorrow is Sunday, I think I shall leave a man behind to bring on any dak, but I know it can't bring any letter from you, so I don't think I will. How I long for a kiss from your pretty lips, how I adore your face, sweetheart. It's the prettiest face in the world to me! Goodnight darling, how I wish I could sleep (or not) with you in my arms tonight!!

“Feb. 1. **Mongnai**. I had a long march but good going. The bungalow here is also used as a Post Office, so I only have one room. I found a few official letter is here, also one from Renny to say goodbye. He says he will come down for the day to see you & the Godson, but won't be in London till March, so you can communicate with him & arrange a day. Let the governess & children have lunch in the schoolroom. His address is, Lt Colonel T. F. B. Renny-Tailyour, R. E. Balmedie, Aberdeenshire.

“There is an American Missionary here, but I haven't time to go & see him. He has a jolly nice house & Garden. I passed it as I came along. I am sending you in a separate envelope some seeds I picked today, of a sort of Lily, red, not large. Plant them & see what happens. I've also asked a man in **Taunggyi** to send you a box of 25 Shan lilies, you remember we had some in **Bangalore**, great big white flowers with yellow spots inside. They will do best in doors, but Gordon told me his mother had some flowering out of doors in Scotland. Don't be greedy & keep them all for yourself. You might send **Una & Mary** a few & also some to **Maggie Ryder**²⁴ who is a great gardener. A dak comes in here tomorrow from **Taunggyi**. I still feel stiff above the knees from the steep down hill 3 days ago. I haven't made up my mind yet how far to go tomorrow. The total distance to **Mong Pan** is 53 miles, three long marches or four decent ones; though Mr Doran makes it 5. Darling heart I feel quite sorry to part with a letter when I've got it to a decent length. It's lovely to feel that January is over, and so will

24 Probably a first cousin Margaret Agnes Ryder 1850-1931, daughter of his eldest uncle Canon Henry Dudley Ryder.

February before you get this. The time will pass, darling & then we shall be once more together. God bless you my darling, heaps of love & kisses from Your ever adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

2nd February, to Ida: “My own darling sweetheart, I did my long march today, 20 miles & felt rather tired. I got in at 1, having lunch *en route* & my mules in at 2.30. Then I had a peg, my bath & went to sleep, so I had tea late, and now it's 6 o'clock. I've another long march tomorrow. It's cloudy this evening, but I don't suppose it will rain. I'm in a very nice teak wood zayat, with two sides open, however the headman sent curtains & it was all nicely arranged. Darling, how I wish we could think out some plan so as to have another son & yet not be separated. The difficulty is that with my sort of camping we can't have a baby with us out here. If you decide not to have one this time when I come home it will be our last good chance gone. No time is very convenient to us to have babies, but certainly this time when I shall have 20 months leave looks about the best. However this time you are going to decide for once in a way; but I don't want you to dismiss the idea. I want you to think over it & tell me what you think. Of course we might have another girl, but I have an idea that when you want to have one very much it will be a boy. There's no doubt it's a very great pleasure to me to see you in the family way. I feel that I have put a baby into your womb & to kiss you there, and watch you growing bigger & bigger & watch your breasts swelling, and then (*when*) the baby is born to see you feeding it and feel that it owes its existence to our love for each other, all this is a great delight to me. Isn't it sometimes to you, darling. Then of course later on we should be only too delighted at having two sons, and they would be a jolly little couple, wouldn't they? If I took my full leave, at the end of it I might have to come out alone. No.5 would only be 11 months old at the latest; that you could come out & join me 6 months later & then we would start saving for our chicks. Still as all the trouble & pain falls on you I'm not going to say either way. If only you could say “yes”, and after I had done it, instead of almost crying & making me feel a brute, you could say, “I adore you, you darling & I am so happy”; why that would be lovely & too good to be true Sweetheart. Whatever you do, I adore you, but I always adore you more when you wild in the family way. This is a very shocking letter, isn't it. Does it make you blush? Still we are husband & wife and can discuss these things. I had to fill my pen here & thanks to you not sending the filler I've a fairly covered my hands with ink. I'm told here Mr Doran passed through here four days ago & had fever while he was here. This is a very hot valley, quite low down & a lot of tobacco is grown. Tomorrow I have to cross a river by ferry, do 16 miles including a good stiff climb. My foot is much better & I walked most of the way today. Tell me darling, you don't think it wrong of me to write to you as I have. I won't if you think it's wrong, but I don't think it is; anyhow it is just what I do feel, and I haven't got your photo in front of me today either. My Shan doesn't progress very much with these long marches. I hope to have a week's halt at **Mongpan**; how hot this valley will be crossing it, returning to **Taunggyi** in May. I've even gone so far as to think of Godparents, **John Newnham**²⁵, **Ethel Thomson**²⁶; and if it's a boy your Father. He would be awfully pleased. Your mother can wait till no. 6 comes. Mind you in another 15 years you won't be able to have babies; then you will have to be interested in your grandchildren. What do you think Dr Colgate will say when he hears that you've made up your mind to have another baby. You didn't have nurse Gardiner, but someone else, who will make you eat, so that you can feed your baby, after she has gone (&) I can have the pleasure of watching you & see you standing up with a nice figure.

“Feb. 3. I don't get to my letter to you till after dinner, as I've had a busy day. I got in about 12 & my mules at 1.30. Then 80 sepoys under a subadar turned up from **Mongpan**, they have been the survey escort, but have just been relieved by Gurkhas, the Pathan subadar²⁷ came & talked to me for about an hour, then I did some Shan, then mailbags arrived with some Pioneers only that may, so you see how you've been neglected. I say, aren't I a brute suggesting the idea of your going through all the trouble &

²⁵ Born 1865, grandson of his oldest uncle Canon Henry Dudley Ryder.

²⁶ Born 1861, a first cousin and niece to his mother Julia.

²⁷ Or subedar, an historical rank in the Indian Army, ranking below British commissioned officers and above non-commissioned officers.

pain of another baby when you being such a brick & given me four, but don't mind me. You are the Dearest little darling in the world anyhow. There were a whole heap of official letters in the bag, but I let them slide. I stopped here to scribble a line to Mr Doran that I am coming in tomorrow. The march is 17 miles, but good going, so I shall get in by 12 o'clock. Today I had 5 miles flat including crossing a small river on a raft, then a sweaty 1½ hours up hill & then some nice shady slightly down hill. Having looked on one picture in what I wrote yesterday, i.e. start a baby as soon as we meet, take my full 20 months leave & come out together, leaving babies behind in April 1905; the alternative is only use 1 year & 3 months to Nov. 1904 then come up & go straight into camp, not having any more babies. We shall never probably have a good chance of having a baby again, so it's rather a final decision. What do you say? Now don't be silly, we've been married 10 years, but tell me which you would prefer. It's rather fun puzzling out Shan, and I'm going to go at it steadily; I can't possibly pass this year, not time enough. Goodnight my sweet darling.

“Feb. 6. I must get along with my letter. I had a longish march in here, found Mr Doran & am now comfortably installed in a good house. Yesterday I was busy all day taking over charge, and writing officials & getting to understand where the work lay. I shall go they stay here just the week, getting back here about 6th. March, so after this letter you mustn't expect another for 3 mails. After that I shall be in touch with the dak again. Mr Doran has rather left inspecting the Surveyors slide, so I have to make up for it. However I'd sooner be on the move, the time passes quicker. I am really only waiting so long as a week to get a letter from you, so you see how you interfere with my work. I've also been looking out the programme 3 or 4 years ahead to see where you & I will go together. You will have plenty of hard work if you really mean to come out with me, as we shall have to march out to **Keng Tung** to begin with & probably make that our headquarters. I do hope I'm right in bringing you to such outlandish parts.

“Feb. 7. I didn't get very far with my letter yesterday, things continually interrupt & I shall be quite glad to be off, where I can devote myself to you a bit more & make love to you. I'm very comfortable here & with you with me we shall make ourselves very comfortable. There is a sweeper in the party, so that little question is all right. The only difficulty that remains is your napkins & you will have to worry that out. I'm writing with a “g” (?) pen as my Swan has run dry. The nights are very pleasant, in the middle of the day it is a bit warm already in this plain, but really only because one wants a breeze through the house which we don't get as one long side is a blank wall. This place, like all zayats has one long room & a verandah round. Then we have a lot of large waterproof sheets, which we partition off rooms; so we shall have a quite private bedroom & bathroom for you all right.

“Feb. 9. I shall be quite glad to get away on the march again & have more time to myself, so that I can write to you. I leave on the 12th the day after the dak comes in and I shall be away quite three weeks so you mustn't expect another letter to you get it. It has been raining & thundering the last two nights, but no sweater wearing at night now & I'm sitting this morning just a pleasant in my pyjamas. Darling I love & adore you & kiss you all over. Fondest love to your dear sweet self. Love & kisses to the chicks, forever Your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

15th February, Camp, to Ida: “My own sweet darling, I sent you in a letter this morning, I was delayed till 8 o'clock waiting for a guide, who turned up at last, then I had a comfortable March on a good path, till the last ½ mile or so when I began the descent to the **Salween**. I then found such a nice place that I thought I would stop; so as to get the crossing of the river done in the early morning, as it is pretty hot down there once the mist has gone off. I put up in a nice little bungalow shed, close to a poongyi chawn. Then when I had had my bath & tea, a sudden storm came on, thunder & rain; so I had sundry improvements made. My roof is made of grass single thatch with lots of holes in it, so I had two waterproof sheets stretched across. I wish you were here; it is raining away outside but I'm quite comfy in here. Burmars & Shans are wonderfully good at reading up on anything with a few bamboos; and they say that after a little rain the thatch swells & is then watertight. I'm on a sort of flat ledge ¼ mile wide or so looking down into the **Salween** valley. I could have gone on down to the river but it was very hot. I know there is a tremendous climb the other side, so I doubt tomorrow whether I shall do

much more than get down to the river & cross. My headache has gone & I am quite well thank you. I'm keen on doing long marches, because the sooner I can do the work near here & turn south the sooner I shall meet the mail with your letter. When I get back to my headquarters we shall be in regular correspondence, I mean, you will be getting regular letters from me & I the same. You poor darling; I've just been reading through your letter again, all about the "flu" & **Violet** with nettle rash. Next on to I expect to hear you have the "flu"; and no one to look after you. Just cleaned & lit my pipe. The rain has gone off, but may be it's like our old friends the thunderstorms in the Himalayas coming round again. I heard a peacock calling just now got a long way off on the hill side. I'm longing to get more letters to hear the family are all right. It was very good of **Una & Mary** sending the agate hearts; they told me they were sending them. They are very keen on **Margaret**²⁸ going to stay there, but the influenza will have put that off, try & manage it if you can. When you are with me, you will attract more notice than you've ever had before, because except on the main road none of the people you'll ever have seen a white lady; you must expect a crowd at each village come to look at you, and you must ignore the fact that half the ladies will be feeding their babies. In our headquarters camp you will be comfortable enough, but when I'm out inspecting you will have to rough it a bit. I shall not be out in camp quite as long as I expected, but then I'm spending less than I thought I would. To give you an idea how little one spends out in camp. In the 15 days of this month I've spent Rs.9-12-0 myself, not much is it. Here's my monthly expenditure.

"Servants pay	47-8-0
Pony hired	15-0-0
Food &c. in camp	<u>20-0-0</u>
	82-8-0

"Not much, is it. I suppose Rs.90 would cover everything, of course not including stores which come in a lump sum at the beginning; so you see with us together we should be able to save quite a nice lot. If we could put in three camping seasons together, it would be fine, and we could then have something in hand for **Margaret & Enid** when they come out. Thanks so much for sending the Standards, they are a great resource to me in camp, but I've finished last week's now. You may notice Standards more letter to you. I haven't sent any money home yet, as I haven't been able to draw any pay without a last pay certificate, but you had plenty in hand, so Cox won't worry.

"Feb. 16. I only had less than an hour to get down to the river & crossed while the mist was an, then I waited to see all my mules across, and then found that the surveyor I wanted to see had left the place where I crossed only the day before & was only two hours march away; so I went on & got to this village **Hsi-paw**²⁹ by about 12 o'clock. Had my tent pitched & a nice shelter in front of it, about 3 yards square with a thatched roof & one wall of thatch on the sunny side. The survey is out at work, So I don't quite know whether I shall stop here a day or not. The thunderstorm yesterday cooled the air a lot. The excitement of the march was while I was seeing my kit & mules across the river. I couldn't think why 4 Khalassis hadn't turned up with the mules. At last they arrived carrying a doe saubher (?). They had found it close to the path, just killed by a tiger, who must have been frightened of it as I went by. They are all going to have a tremendous feed tonight & I expect we'll have headaches tomorrow. If I had had a rifle I should have halted & gone back & set up at the place hoping master tiger might come back. I also saw a tame elephant dragging an enormous trunk of a tree through the jungle, down to the river where it floats away down to **Monhnein** (?) I suppose; so there's something to tell their children. Last night & early this morning I went for a prowl after jungle fowl that saw none, although there were several crowing in the jungle, also several peacock but the jungle is so thick as to be quite impenetrable. I thought the jungle fowl would be out in the fields feeding in the early morning. When we are together we will have a couple of goats for milk, but the unsweetened tinned milk is excellent, none of that heavy sugary taste of the old Swiss milk. It is curious I'm quite close to where I first started work the first year I came to the Shan States, I spent Xmas Day crossing of the **Salween** about

28 Now 9½.

29 Latitude 22.623632°N, Longitude 97.300360°E.

10 miles north of where I crossed it today. I know exactly how we should have our two tents pitched here, both opening onto the shelter; in which we would pass the day. You will have to take things to occupy you such as painting while I go out to inspect the surveillance, but you won't have a lonely time like in **Kangra**, because I shall only go out occasionally, when I like & as long as I like. I do hope you will have a happy time camping with me. Of course the main road to **Keng Tung** one can ride all the way, but on some of these side paths you will have to walk sometimes, so no high heeled shoes my dear.

“After dinner. I have arranged to march tomorrow seeing some of these surveyors work *en route*. I want to hurry up as much as possible. These surveyor told me he was upset crossing the **Salween**, fortunately he could swim. How nice it would be to sit here & look at your pretty face; if you were here we should hold tomorrow. I've been enjoying a tin of Inccotash American; it's beans & Indian corn & excellent; but the Shan States have improved wonderfully in vegetables. For instance at **Mongpan** one can get peas & cabbages. It's unfortunate you don't like onions, because I do like them so much. There's nothing to grumble at in the heat yet; that you will feed it a bit marching back to **Taunggyi** in April. Goodnight, you little dear.

“Feb. 17. I only made a short march today but it included doing of the road to see a surveyor's work. I'm in a small zayat with waterproof sheets. These zayats can be made quite a private enough for you I think. As I was walking along today I suddenly missed my pen, out of my pocket. I sent two men back to hunt along the road, and it was found all right; but until I got it again, I felt what's the good of your giving me anything, I always lose it; however I hope my pen will have a long life yet. I have a long march tomorrow including up a hill to **Mongpu**. I shall be glad to get there because then I shall turn south towards my dak. I found some big lemons at the last village & had some lemonade made, it wasn't bad, but might be better; it's good for one though, made of fresh fruit. This is a regular jungle village, just the village clearing & jungly hills all round. I have a hole dug for myself just in the jungle with matting round for necessary purposes. You will have your box all right & a sweeper. Don't you think we had better come out in October 1904 in time for that field season, I'm afraid we shall be spending still more of the very little money we still have left, and it would leave me with leave in hand. Perhaps however you may be so keen on having another son, then I could take all my leave. I'm in a shady place, so quite cool, but it was hot walking up a hill today. It will make a great difference to us when I once begin to officiate in the grade higher than I am now. I'm 7th now, early next year Colonel Gore retires & as Col. Longe is going to be next Surveyor General passing over Col. Hobday's head I hope the latter will retire. Even that will only make me 5th; so I want at least a couple of other retirements to make things fairly certain of my officiating up a grade. Col. Wahab May read tower for one, as his senior to Longe as an R.E. but junior to him in the Survey. There is no doubt that the feeling that we are living at home beyond our income takes away a great deal of the enjoyment from me.

“5 o'clock. I've been good doing some Shan; I'm not going up for any exam in it this year. It is quite impossible to really learn properly unless one is settled in a place & can do 3 or 4 hours a day; but still I shall learn enough to ask simple questions. We are getting through February; it seems such an age since I left you, really not quite two months. Sweetheart, you will have to run the letting of the house for the summer holidays; please do this if you can, it will be a great saving & though some trouble to you, I think you ought to do something to make up for your Empress Gate extravagance & then that will be forgotten. Will you let me know when the usual summer holidays are, & for how long. I hope you have asked the de Lotbinière's down to stay with you, you ought to, we've stayed so much with them.

“After a very enormous dinner, consisting of white soup with macaroni, roast fowl, potatoes & peas; chicken curry, macaroni cheese & baked custard, chipatti & cheese, with a whiskey & sparklet. How would you do on that fair. I expect you would swell as I have. Now after a dinner like that it's obvious I can't go to bed for some time. I wonder whether you will want to go to bed early when we are in camp together. If I had you to talk to I could stay up to any our, but then if I had you hear it would be an additional reason for going – order, order, as you were! I really think this cook would do us very well,

he is very quiet & respectable & in **Mongpan**, he made very decent bread, only he says you can only make it when we are halted 2 or 3 days. He makes a mud oven & that takes a day to dry. I puzzled over the dhobi question because, as you know, it's a matter I am rather indifferent to; the things I march in our hung out to dry & are ready for the next day, but we couldn't have your garments hanging out to dry in the same opened fashion as mine. However I daresay we shall think out some plan. Anyhow, darling, please remember that I shall do everything in my power to make things comfortable for you; so when everything isn't exactly as it should be, you must forgive me & make the best of it. You will be a darling to come out with me & it will make the time most enjoyable to me. You must keep well though; no fever allowed.

"10 past 8, & I've nearly finished my cheroot & am jolly time at. I went out this evening for a wander after jungle fowl, one brute (?) crowed about 20 yards away, but I neither could see him nor get him to rise. I'm starting in the morning. You'll have to learn some way of rolling your hair up quick. Bath comes after the march, when you can do toilet & then lie down & have a hog. I shouldn't be a bit surprised if when I come home you insist on trying to have another son. What do you say? How I long to see our little man & give him a brother, don't you? He was pale certainly & I should love to see him with a colour. Now, goodnight darling, I adore you, you dear sweet little pet. God bless you.

"Feb. 18. A long up hill to near my first hill I climbed up in Dec. 1893 & then a long down hill to **Mongpu**. I had lunch by a jolly stream; it is so refreshing to have a wash of hands & head before lunch; then I rode the last two miles because the path was continually crossing a stream. Now I'd turned south, not quite direct, because I have to go a little off the road to see a surveyor. Tomorrow my mail leaves **Mongpan**, that is what I'm thinking of. Passing my old hill made me think of you a lot on the march. Then we had only been married a year & only **Margaret** was born & now we've four. You have been a darling sweet wife & my love for you grows more & more every year. I've just had a visit from the headman of this small state, quite an intelligent youth. One thing has changed. In those days they didn't (know) what we were up to & it was very difficult to find out about the paths. Now they are willing to tell one all about the paths. The hut near my tent has an unfortunate girl in it, whom I fancy is mad. She makes a noise like a goat & though she is tall (*taller?*) than **Margaret** walks about stark naked. It is a curious thing is that when girls or women are mad amongst Shans, one thing they will not wear is clothes. I think that I shall meet my dak in 6 days, then they will go back with this & other letters; and I hope I shall only have missed one mail to you I wonder if you look forward as much to my letters as I do to yours. I don't think you possibly can; because you see with the children & house & shops & friends you have more to occupy you, while I have nothing, once my march is over, but write to you & occupy myself with odds & ends of things. I didn't go yesterday or today, which is a nuisance. I wonder if you read my letters in bed, I love reading yours like that, but then you write very proper, old maidish letters.

"After dinner. If I had some interesting book I'm afraid you wouldn't get such long letters. I sat outside my tent smoking & thinking of you. Do you know, I on purpose brought out no maps of China or other outlandish parts, so that I shouldn't be tempted to plan out travels, not of course for this year but for future years; however some day I do hope I may make the one journey remaining to be done from the side of India & that is to the sources of the **Irrawaddy**, but that won't be for 4 or 5 years if it ever comes of so don't be afraid. I want to have 3 field seasons with you in the Shan hills first. I miss you dreadfully in the evenings, how lovely it would be if only you were sitting opposite me now. I'm selfish & want you all to myself & shall much prefer being alone with you in the jungles to being in Bangalore with you & I'm not so conceited as to think you would quite agree. It's rather curious to think that after this go at home, probably at the end of the next time we shall be bringing **Margaret** out! & You are doing chaperone. When I get this next dak I shall get the one after pretty quick as my nose will be turned more towards **Mongpan**. I think you had better address now % Messrs Grindlay, Groome & Co. Bombay; I can telegraph to them where to send my letters. Any letter you write after the middle of April or see on or after 20th April, address direct to **Bangalore**, unless I take you to the contrary. When I get to **Bangalore** I shall be thinking of nothing but getting home to you. I shall get there as late as I

can, as I loathe the place without you; especially as it will be this season. I wish I could start gave violent flotation with someone, as you would, if you were buying yourself in Bangalore, but you're never going to do that any more, are you? Now goodnight, my pretty darling.

“19th Feb. I took 4 hours over my march today & found the surveyor I wanted. The march was pretty but tiresome, as I had to cross & recross a stream about 20 times. I halt here tomorrow going out to see the surveyor's work, and then march south 3 marches into the next man's work where I expect to meet one of the assistance, and halt a day or two & I hope my dak will catch me there; so I haven't got very much longer to wait. I'm in a tumbledown poongyi chawn & it's rather hot & there are mosquitoes, so it's not a place I should halt in for choice. There were several pretty shady pools on the march that looked very tempting for a bathe; at one I thought how pretty you would look dressed as a nymph, & so you would, a little duck! Even in this place I would make you quite comfy; but you would complain of the heat, or the dirt, never mind you shall have some phenyle (?) to throw about. It's only 8 days since your last letter, but I'm longing for another. I hope you will get your servants settled soon & then I shall get longer letters. Do you still drop off to sleep after dinner, I hope not, now that you have the baby of your hands you oughtn't to. You never told me you miss me at nights, I believe with your 4 chicks round you, you don't miss any nearly as much as I miss you. When I was here in /93 I didn't stop here but somewhere in the jungle & I had a member getting a dak from you near here, two fat letters. I shall go out for a stroll soon.

“After dinner. I've managed to while away the time till ¼ past 8 with an R. E. Journal & a cheroot. One would think what a splendid opportunity for learning Shan & so it would be if I wasn't so tired after my work that I can't keep my attention on it. There are a few clouds knocking about but I don't know whether they mean business or not. I've got my mosquito curtains up tonight, but I think the musketeers have gone to bed. As I was sitting writing before I went out I was suddenly startled by an old cock who flew up on to the railing near my head. He proposed roosting there, however I said, no, my friend, out you go & out he went. Tell the children I eat two chickens every day & they each cost 2d, but they are small. I had chicken pillao today, one of my favourite dishes. I didn't bring out a bottle of Madeira from **Mongpan**, I thought I'd reserve some but a glass tonight would have cheered me up. I'm not looking forward to a day's halt here. I shall get back from work by midday; I have the consolation of thinking my dak is one march towards me tonight. Sweetheart I couldn't stand another season camping by myself; I mean this peaceable camping, and expedition is different; so don't forget that & try & get out of coming out with me, I believe you'd willingly have another baby as an excuse to stay in England. Darling sweetheart, how I adore you.

“20th Feb. I started at 7 & got back at 12, I took my lunch with me, but didn't eat it, so when I got in I first heard a good sponge all over with cold water, got into my pyjamas & had lunch. I wish you were here, only then I couldn't be in pyjamas & there's no doubt they are most comfortable when it's hot. I had to go up a long steep hill & didn't I sweat, however I have finished off with this survey & away I go tomorrow. The road is reported very bad, so I've sent out villagers to improve it, but I shall have a long day of it, I fancy. I shall give you plenty to do, all the stores will be in your charge & you have to keep a book going & enter every tin that's opened otherwise you don't know what is being bagged or how one stands. The only thing my cooks boy take so far is sugar & I've stopped that, but it isn't a bad plan to issue them a ration of sugar each week for themselves; then you've got to see to the meals & take the accounts, though that is simple, because the interpreter only gets chickens, eggs & vegetables & there is no daily accounts, new “soup next lama” (??) &c; Then you've got to be your own dhobi to a certain extent. I wish you would find out what washerwomen at home wash the clothes with besides soap, I mean to make them come so white; then you have to iron, & mend our clothes. We shall have two goats in the headquarters, also a little family of 6 or 8 hens with a cock of course, for eggs; then you've got to see our two ponies fed, besides arranging our Robinson Crusoe house nicely, so you see you won't have an idle time. You've got to keep fit all the time, because you will have no dandy. You have to ride or walk. Do you like all this prospect? I think I shall have a sleep this afternoon, as it's only ¼ to 1 now. I don't fancy you will think the scenery very beautiful, but I shall, when you're with me.

Two men have just brought a letter from Mr Kelly & as I have to send them back with an answer to **Mongpan** they may as well take this along with them; it may just catch a dak that my regular one might miss; so I'm glad you've got a good long letter ready, as I have some work to get ready in **Mongpan**. I shall probably more direct than I intended & reach there on the 2nd March, a mail will come in on the 4th so that will just suit me. After tea I was quite busy, I had to write Mr Kelly a long letter & also the headman of the village came to see me. Dear sweetheart I'm going to do 3 jolly long marches to get hold of my dak as quickly as possible. I want to hear that the influenza has gone away. I've just written **Una** a letter & also filled my pen including covering my fingers with ink all because you will not send my filler. I'm getting hungry for my dinner & shall finish this afterwards.

“After dinner. I have everything ready for the dak except this letter, but I shan't write much longer; it's only just past 8 but I'm jolly tired & sleepy. How I'm looking forward to a good hug for you & to kiss your pretty face. Take care of our precious son, he is the only one at present, perhaps you don't want to have another. You're a darling anyhow & you've been the best & dearest of wives. In these days to have 4 children marks you out. Please note I send you 2 annas' worth of letter, but I haven't had more than a penn'orth from you yet. You haven't told me how the China Lilies are doing. Oh! I'm just longing to hear from you, mind you) loving letters, darling. You're all the world to me & worth more than all the sons & daughters we could possibly have. God bless you & keep you safe & well. I continually look forward to our happy meeting. Kisses & love to the darling 4. My dearest love & most passionate kisses to you, you darling, forever Your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

21st February, to Ida: “My own sweet darling, A letter won't even to you this morning. My march today wasn't so long as I thought; I got in to this jungle village about 1, stopping *en route* to see a surveyor & my mules came in soon after. I couldn't find a place to pitch my tent, so had the jungle cleared by 6 active ladies, one of whom had a very finely developed chest, if you could feed one baby at your best, I should think she could feed four. It was a very hilly march & when it wasn't hilly the path ran along mostly in a stream. Tomorrow's march will also be hilly & the day after I expect to reach the place where I meet my dak. What a blow if it is not there, or if there is no letter from new in it; that would be a blow. Shan & Burmese men are awfully lazy. The women do all the hard work. I don't know whether it is in consequence of that, but they only have very small families. I have hurt my left arm a little, I don't know how. I didn't sleep well last night, there were rats & a bat in my hut. I didn't mind that, but the bat made me think of you & then I suppose being in a doleful mood, I kept thinking of all my faults & the little things I do that annoy you & that kept me awake, wishing I was better for your sake, for you deserve the best of husbands, darling & I shall never feel I'm quite worthy of you, but anyhow nobody could love you more than I do, sweetheart, I can say so much in my own favour. When I get my dak I shall have a lot of official letters to answer, so shall not have much time for you, as the men must go back the next day; so I don't fancy this will be a very long letter. I'm sitting in trousers & vest, but by evening I shall want a coat. What brutes these jungle fowl are. Yesterday I prowled up the valley in the evening with no result. I didn't go down in the valley, because of the stream; this morning only ¼ mile from the village we were walking along making plenty of noise & suddenly up got about 20 jungle fowl from a place where evidently some bullocks had been fed, because there was a lot of grain about. If I had had my gun in my hand they would have been just out of shot; but if I had been walking along quietly by myself I could have got close to them & I believe even I could have hit some; some rose, some ran. How I did sweat today walking up the biggest hill. A good shot with a good dog could get plenty of jungle fowl hereabouts. I shall go out for my evening prowl tonight, but it's only 5 o'clock now, and it's not much use going out till ½ past.

“Feb. 22. I have heaps to tell you today. First in my evening prowl I first saw a jungle hen in the fields. She flew off, but a lot of cock were crowing round, so I stood quietly behind a tree, presently two of those (*sic*) pine marten came out. I could have shot them easily, one came up to (*within*) about 5 yards of me, so I said boh! suddenly & he fled. I made certain some jungle fowl would come out but none did. Then on my way home I heard some big animal crashing through the jungle. I didn't quite like this as I only had my shot gun. Then it turned out to be a lot of monkeys. After dinner I was so tired I couldn't

write & wonderful to relate I slept soundly till 6 without wanting to go out for one thing at 4 o'clock as I have to every morning.

“On the march I saw 2 Jungle fowl but couldn't get a shot. They rose behind clumps of bamboos. I got to a village about ½ past 10, a long climb up hill & then ditto down. However I decided to go on down to a small river, the **Nam Hsim** to get across today. Herein I proved myself too clever. There were no men in the village, but the women assured me 4 men had gone down to the river to get the raft ready for my crossing, so away I went, another big up hill & then down to this most pretty little river, how you would admire the scenery. Well I walked up it to the crossing about a mile up, but found no signs of any men. A thunder shower wetted us & then I walked back to where I first met the river, as that place was the only possible camping ground. Now I have to halt tomorrow while my interpreter goes back to the village to get men. So I gained nothing by my double march.

“I met the mules just as I got back to this place; & while my tent was being pitched, I went down to the river & changed my things & paddled about, then about 4.30 I had tea & a smoke. I was thirsty, as I had sweated tremendously. For tea I had 4 cups of lemonade (home brewed) & 3 cups of tea. What a pity I haven't met my dak yet, a days halt then would be delightful. I found 4 khalassis sitting disconsolately looking at the river. They had come down from signalling from a hill & couldn't cross, so they are with me. Should my interpreter get men, we will cross tomorrow afternoon. There are mosquitoes or sand flies here, my feet tell me so. It is hot down here in the day, but at night very pleasant. You must bring out a fishing rod, because there are heaps of fish in these rivers. There is a rapid just below my camp. I'm on a little promontory, but a little higher up the river flows quite silently, but rapidly, with tropical jungle on both sides, masses of tree ferns, bamboos, jungly creepers & flowering shrubs, all very lovely & if you were only here it would be lovelier still.

“I had to send back for more rice for the men; of course these valleys are feverish, so it's not good to stay longer than necessary, but at this time of year they are all right. There will be a heavy mist here tomorrow morning. Of course when you are with me I shall not do these long marches, but you would have walked a good part of the down hill, as it was almost too steep to write down. I walked ½ of each of the two hills & rode the other half. I fancy dinner will be a bit late tonight. I ordered a tin of fruit to be opened but I cook had already started stewing some prunes, so I postpone the fruit till tomorrow. I wonder which you will like this, the pears or peaches. I prefer the pears; those sort of things which I call luxuries. The best way of calculating how much to bring out is to allow a tin of every so many days; one tin of fruit would last two days, so I think one tin every 10 days would do that & so on.

23rd. Another thunderstorm came on this morning & rain for an hour or so making everything jolly wet. Now it's ½ past 9. I've had breakfast & I've just got to wait patiently all day. My Interpreter went back to the last village early this morning; but even (*if*) he gets men at once he can't be back till 2 or 3 & I don't expect him back till the evening. There were certainly no men in the village when I passed through except 1 who was deaf & dumb. It's cruel bad luck having this halt when my mail is so near. It's still a bit cloudy. I didn't sleep very well, I was restless. I think I had a blanket too much over me. How I would love a day's halt if only you were with me. I wish I had a fishing rod with me, it would be something to do to fish, anyway it would pass the time even if I caught nothing. I shall soon have everything hung out to dry. If no men are obtainable from this village we shall have to to buckle to & construct a raft for ourselves, but getting it across will not be easy without anyone who understands the working of them. However the day will pass somehow & we are getting near the end of February which is a good thing.

“Feb. 24. You were neglected yesterday because to my delight I found a book in my bag which I had forgotten, “Alice Loraine (?)” by Blackmore, so I read it steadily all day. Again I slept badly, but had two good turn outs this morning & now I'm all right, thank you. I didn't get hold of the men to help cross the river till rather late, so it was passed 10 before we got away from this side. We crossed on a bamboo raft, only strong enough to take 3 of us at a time as passengers. Most of the day we were marching in & out of a stream & didn't get here till 4.30, a small deserted village. I had to ride most of the way, going

to the stream, so wasn't a bit tired, now I've had tea & am waiting for my bath. He opened a tin of shortbread today for tea, very good. I hear there is a surveyor I want to see only 2 miles ahead, so I shall only do a short march tomorrow. I expect my dak is in his camp; if it isn't I don't know where the dickens it's got to. I'm not sorry to get away from the river; it's a pretty feverish valley I fancy.

“Now I've had my bath & shave & feel nice & clean. My men are all in the deserted huts, but I didn't fancy them, so had my tent pitched. I shall be glad of a short march tomorrow to get my tents pitched early & let them & everything else get dry. I wonder if you will have a good appetite like I have out in camp, & oh! Sweetheart how I do hope you won't get fever. I think that by boiling & filtering water, nearly all fever can be avoided & the remainder by ordinary care, having a change of things with one, protection from the sun & decent food. What I do about water is when I'm in the hills, near a running stream & no village above I only filter, otherwise I filter & boil. I always have my water bottle filled with cold tea to drink on the march with lunch or if I'm thirsty. I've just run out of sugar, I have plenty more in **Mongpan**; but that is a thing, when you are with me you will have to issue daily. Riding one's marches it's not hot even yet & the nights are still delightful, I mean in weather; of course they can't be really delightful to me without you. I hope you won't insist in sleeping in sheets. I thought you might tack on sheeting about a foot or two deep at the end of the blankets next your chin. Whether you like it or no, you will have a pair of loose sleeping socks. I know you well, how you will complain of the cold. That is one advantage of a sleeping bag, you can sit in need of an evening. Now for dinner.

“Feb. 25. Darling, you can imagine my delight last night just before dinner when I saw torches coming down the hill & this was the dak with your letter of Jan. 16. I'm so glad I've passed my promotion exam; the special certificate means getting more than 80 per cent in all subjects. It doesn't make the slightest odds how one passes though, to pass is the great thing. Today I did a fair march, but walking in a new pair of boots has given me rather a blister. I saw two surveyors on the road & now there's only one I want to see, otherwise I march straight back to **Mongpan**, 5 marches from here, but another dak leads **Mongpan** tomorrow. I'm glad you & baby only had slight influenza, poor dears. Your new governess seems promising, I mean Miss Dean & now I hope she will be permanent. I see from the papers that you have been having it cold; it was wiser for **Margaret** not to go to **Murhill**, she will enjoy herself much more at Easter. I hope you have found my last pay certificate. I can't draw any pay without it & if it's really lost there will be no end of a bother. I love to hear accounts of our son, I'm sure he will be a splendid chap. Thanks for the list of cheques, I will keep a list of them. Do the best you can about keeping down expenses, one can't do more. Of course much of the cheques were for what we already had bought. I'm sending in the dak man tomorrow & he will I think just catch the dak. It looks like rain again tonight. I'm not sorry as it keeps the haze away & the air cool. Last night I sat up till 11, not reading newspapers as you might I suppose, but doing office accounts, & when I went to bed I could not get warm, longed for you, for in spite of your grumbling at cold, you have much better circulation than I have.

“After dinner. It's quite cold again tonight. I've been reading Standards till ¼ past 9 & Sue you won't get much more letter. You darling, how I love & adore you & worship you. I look forward to our happy meeting, when we shall have a long long time together. God bless you sweetheart, heaps of love & kisses to you darling & to the little 4, the small family, for ever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

26th February, Camp, to Ida: “My own darling sweetheart, I only came a short march today; got in by 9.30; but I couldn't go further as there is a big range ahead & no good camping ground did you get the other side. Now I look forward to next dak, which left **Mongpan** today, but I don't think it will quite meet me tomorrow. I shot an Imperial pigeon yesterday in a tree, they are just like ordinary pigeon only about twice the size. All my things are having a good drying today. My cook complained of a chill from drinking too much cold water on the march, & wanted medicine but I didn't know what to give him, so I told him to cover himself with blankets & then go to sleep. Thanks for sending on Rigby's note; I'm sorry I missed him, he is one of the nicest chaps I know. We were in **Peking** together. I'm very improvident about my newspapers, instead of keeping one or two a day, I have finished them all off already. I'm glad to find that it remains pleasantly cool here so late, marching back from **Keng Tung** to

Taunggyi you & I together will have it hot but then it's a good road, so one can do with the marches quickly in the morning.

“March 1. I have some lee way to make up on the 27th. I had a long hill & then down again; it is a pity one can hardly ever camp on the tops of the hills here as there is no water. I missed a jungle fowl; then in the evening my dak came in. Next day I decided to halt to see a surveyor, but he came in about 12, so I decided to march, 4 miles to the river, then down the bank for a mile or two, crossed & then down the other bank for 2 miles; and it was nearly 6 by the time I got in, very tired. I met some Gurkhas taking out money to one of my parties, the naik (?) presented me with some small fish they had just caught & then asked for the loan of my gun to try & get a jungle fowl, but he failed too. Today I got in about 12 & tomorrow I reach **Mongpan**. I've been badly bitten by fleas, so I'm having a great hunt, all my things out in the sun & then well beaten. I'm in a hot little shed. Your dear letter of the 23rd Jan. is before me. Darling, how I do hope & pray that **Lisle** will not be short sighted; you who have good sight can never know what a handicap it is, especially for a boy or girl. It makes them so shy & awkward to say nothing of the inconvenience. I get another mail in on the 4th; no Standards by last mail, naughty girl. I'm in a hot little shed & waiting for my bath.

“6.30. Just back from my prowl, saw 3 or 4 jungle fowl, but the brutes saw me first & got up 100 yards or more away, no luck, however it passes an hour or so very pleasantly. I'll tell you what I shall find difficult & that is I know what I like & what I don't, but it's not so easy with you, I mean in the way of tinned things. It won't do to take out a lot of something & then for you to say you don't like it. The second year of course will be easier. I've learned one thing & that is to be on the safe side with necessaries & to look after one's things carefully. For liquor we shall have I think 1 dozen pints champagne, 2 dozen whiskey, 2 dozen pints Tintara for you, 2 bottles brandy (for emergencies), some ginger wine & cherry brandy & some Madeira, probably 1 dozen & on that I don't think we shall do badly. I'm so glad the nurse is a success. I hope your new housemaid will be, we are gradually increasing their pay though. Now for a cook I wonder what you are going to do. I also wonder whether you have begun to attend to the little household details, such as kitchen bacon &c. I shan't believe you have, till you actually say so. With a governess & nurse you've no excuse! I more & more think it will be wiser to only stay at home till October 1904 & come out just in time for the field season. As carts go up to **Taunggyi** you can bring plenty of things as far as that. Our headquarters will be 3 marches also beyond ~~Taunggyi~~ **Keng Tung** & that is 20 marches also from **Taunggyi** which is 10 from the railway, so we shall have a long march to begin & end with. Going out will be very pleasant, coming back not so. It is to me a most fascinating prospect, darling & I hope you look forward to it too, then when we get back to **Bangalore**, we shall have a nice little sum put by saved. I'm not in a writing mood today, I think because I know there'll be another letter from you on the 4th. I shall not stay very long at **Mongpan**, a week at most. You mustn't expect me to stay long at our headquarters, because I must be out inspecting the survey is at work, but we shall begin by a 3 weeks or so stay. The only drawback to coming out just before the field season is that it would be so convenient for you to have a fortnight or so with dirzies³⁰ making clothes suitable for camp. You see it is useless taking a lot of shirts that want washing, you want coloured flannel or something that doesn't show the dirt, unless you learn to wash & iron yourself.

“March 2. Just got in & the dak is just off, so I send this, as I do you will like to hear the latest. I'm very well & I adore you. God bless you sweetheart. I'm so glad to get back to headquarters & have everything comfortable, but I find heaps of work to do, only 2 days & then a mail comes in. You darling here are heaps of kisses. Don't get any idea into your head that I'm not going to get my leave; I feel quite certain of it. Kiss the darling 4 for me. Follow the Your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

9th March, Camp, to Ida: “My dearly loved one, I sent you off a letter this morning, but it wasn't very long, and as I shall leave here on the 13th I haven't much time to work up another letter. The mail comes in on the 11th & then there are letters to read & generally officials to answer &c. before I go out.

30 Dressmakers.

I'm particularly anxious to get news of who is going to the Chatham course of survey fellows. There are two senior to me who haven't done the course, Bythell & Fraser, if only they would go for it I should get my officiating promotion at once. Erskine who has had his leave granted has 3 months privilege leave granted before his furlough begins i.e. in June I imagine. I believe Gordon has also applied for leave, I hope he'll take it soon, but as 5 fellows now will be back, so as to enable me to get my leave in August I have plenty of margin, because fellows on the Chatham course don't count as on leave. If I officiate up a grade it means Rs 300 a month extra, but while I'm in Burma I lose my Burma allowance, so it means only Rs 200 more while in Burma & Rs 300 while in **Bangalore** & also while on my privilege leave. It would also increase my furlough pay a little; anyhow I get £513 a year furlough pay, so with odds & ends of luck & you doing all you can to be economical we shall manage all right. I think we are working up for a thunderstorm, it is cloudy & stuffy today. I want while I'm at home to go up for the French exam. There is no reward, but it is a good thing to pass & I think if I got a Frenchman in Eastbourne to give me lessons for 2 months or so I could pass; my success over the promotion exams gives me confidence. I shall probably get my majority in 1905. Wouldn't you like to give a captain one more baby. There is no doubt that if you decide not to have any more this time, we shall never have another opportunity that I can see very clearly. What a good wife I should have made. You'll do your photo sittings on my office table. Sweetheart, I wonder if you will ever realise how I adore you & what a high opinion I have of you. I have an idea of suggesting giving another lecture at Cheltenham next winter on "Surveying in the Shan Hills." Scott has taken a lot of photos & I know would willingly let me have 50 or 20 to make slides from. What do you think? It would mean £5 anyhow. I've given up Shan, because my Interpreter was no use for teaching & then I hadn't time to pass this year, so it wasn't much use going on. When we are together, while you go & lie down of an afternoon I can do Shan. Really when one is not marching I have very little work to do except for a day or two after I get in & for a day or two after each mail, so you will have plenty of my company. While I am halted I have tea & bread & butter in bed, then I have breakfast about 10, no don't, but tea about 3.30 & dinner at 7. While that suits you all will you want lunch too? There's no reason why you shouldn't, only I don't feel as if I wanted any. I don't think any steamer via the **Andamans** will be going when I want to go to **Madras** this year, so I'll have to put it off to some other year. I heard in Bangalore that Saunders would probably be given the Burma company. I don't think he'll be best pleased. You're a darling. I wonder whether you think as much of me as I do all of you & I wonder when you think of me when you're going off to sleep whether your thoughts are anything like mine; in case you may pretend not to know what my thoughts are about, you can't tell me what yours are. I've been looking out steamers & I think the most likely one I shall go by will be May 21. Now the mail that leaves **London** on May 1 you must certainly address to **Bangalore**, the one before that address % Grindlay, anything earlier that this may catch % Postmaster, Rangoon. Don't forget.

"10th. I've had a busy day bringing up a lot of the Khalassis service books to date & only done about ¼. Mail in tomorrow. I've written you a half sheet about no. 5 which you must tear up. I do hope sweetheart you have got your bike out, do & ride about, so that we can ride together; it's depriving me of a great pleasure if you don't. Also see that my bike is kept clean & well greased. About golf, I should like to have my name put down so that I can join when I come home, but do find out what the subscription is, many fashionable links at home are frightfully expensive, you will be surprised. Now don't forget about your biking darling, will you. I love being tied to your apron strings but at the same time I hate passing the whole day doing nothing.

"March 11. Before dinner. The dak in & a dear letter from you. However first as to news. I had a letter saying that although no definite promise could be made (they always say that), there seemed no reason why I shouldn't get my leave, so now you got to let me know the date I want to know & then I'll apply. Expect me home sometime in August. It's all right about my last pay certificate, I got Cox to send me another one. Sir G. Scott went off this morning so now I am alone again. I hope to get away on the 13th but have a good many things to see to. You seem to be settling down comfortably, I think you're one extravagance is paying £22 a housemaid. There are about 100 mosquitoes round me, so I'm writing under difficulties & I must close this tomorrow. Considering how you sprawl out your writing I always

look on 2 pages of yours equal to one of mine in quantity. I congratulate you on your 2^d cauliflower. Dear **Lisle** I hope he didn't mind being vaccinated. I'm very pleasantly surprised at Dr Colgate's bill. I say Ida, we shall never get your confinement looked after so cheap, so I think we had better take advantage of it don't you? I am glad to hear **Lisle's** hair is not going to be like my, no redheads thank you. I suppose **Wilfred & Tempé** will have another try. You talk of only 2 years together, I look forward to at least 4 or more. You don't mention influenza so I suppose that is a thing of the past. You will have gathered that I haven't the least intention of being "good" when we meet. On the contrary I shall be worse than I've ever been before. Do you think you can manage letting the house & going to **Stevenage**, it would be such a saving if you could darling & we want it. You couldn't be more excited than I am at our meeting. I'm afraid having got the June idea into your head, you will be disappointed at my not coming home till August, but it can't be helped.

"After dinner, ending up with walnuts & Madeira. There are two very fine jungle fires on the hills, I've just been out to see them. It's quite chilly at night still; so when you're with me I really don't think you will mind the heat very much; it's nothing like the heat of north India, in fact really it's still very pleasant. I eagerly ran through the Pioneer to see if Bythell or Fraser were going home for the Chatham course, it will be rather hard lines if I just miss by one place, officiating up a grade. You will have the choice of plenty of wild flowers out here. Fancy old Ida sitting to the tea & issuing it out, bravo! Now only order the proper kitchen bacon. Does Miss King have all her meals with you? Of course when you are by yourself it's all right, but when I come home it will be rather a nuisance, however I suppose if she's a lady one must put up with it. I told you that I had told the bank at Bangalore to send you home £100 to Cox; and after that you can reckon on £50 a month. I can't send more, because I must leave enough out here to pay for my passage.

"March 12. Darling heart, I have decided to halt one day more here; anyhow I shall send the way the office on the 14th, though I may stay a day or two longer here to meet Mr Kelly. It is still so cold here in the early warnings do you won't feel so cold because you would have to sleep a little more parda (?) nashin that I do. I've been working all day at trying to hunt up the Khalassis services, a big job, but I have finished it as far as I can now. I've no news, I can barely see the surrounding hills which doesn't improve things; and makes life a rather duller than usual. I've got a beastly mile (?) our J's are not Mitchells. I've got a new one now but they only last a day or two.

"March 13. ½ past 7 am. It is so jolly & cold in the mornings. I'm sitting wearing my khaki sweater. I hope I shall get you to start early in the mornings, it is so much nicer to get a good hour's walk before it begins to get hot. While I was waiting for tea this morning I was thinking of our first kiss when we meet, you always have a funny sort of shy look, and don't kiss me half enough. I know I shall think you looking prettier than ever to mind you do; but you mustn't expect to find me looking very nice because I shall have had a hot tiring journey from **Marseilles** & in England one can't change things & have a wash in the railway carriage like in India. I shall have it very rough too from **Bombay** to **Aden**. My dear, how excited I feel when I think of it all. The Pioneer as not quite got to August P&O's in their list of sailings. Wait a moment my room is being swept so I can't yet think about what ship I shall go by. I think I shall go P&O & we will come out P&O. It is almost necessary for us to go through **Bangalore** on our way out. I feel just like you, a day after getting a letter from you I want another. The one nice thing about **Bangalore** will be being so much nearer you & getting your letters quicker. How I shall enjoy the voyage home going towards you & I hope to get a good fast steamer. I want to know what you think about my not taking all my leave at home. You see one can't get leave until one has about 1½ years due, well it will take me 6 years to collect another 1½ years furlough, if I use all I have in hand this time, and that is rather a long time to wait isn't it; but of course if you do & insist on no. 5 then I'd take all my furlough. I'm rather afraid you will.

"March 14. The early morning is my best time for writing, but now I have to think of packing up, so I haven't much time. A mail would reach here on the 18th, but I shall only be a march away from here, so I shan't have to wait much longer. How I am longing, darling, to see your pretty face again. I am keeping very well so far, but I shall have some hottish work this next fortnight and then a bit of a sit

down again in **Mongnan**.

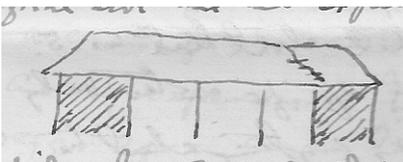
“Darling I must finish now, good night. God bless you, dear pet, heaps of love & kisses, forever Your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

15th March, Camp, to Ida: “My own sweet darling, I started off today about 7 & got to this place **Namtong** at 12.30, had lunch just before arriving. I didn't mean to come here, but changed my mind half way, as I heard there was a surveyor here, however he left this morning. Mr Kelly told me this place was 11 or 12 hours march! I knew it wasn't, that was another reason why I came here, just to shew him he was talking rot. I've a fine zayat (pronounced this zayart), which has four windows & therefore lets the air through. It has struck me several times lately that a mosquito net house like that one we had at Spencer Lodge would be a capital thing; because I am determined you shall not be bitten by mosquitoes or anything else. We should have our mosquito curtains over our beds, at the mosquito house to have meals & sit in, because all March & April the flies & other images are a great nuisance. I will see that you don't get fever, you must see you don't get dysentery. In this country I quite agree to boiling & filtering water; in those lovely Himalayan streams it was rather nonsense, wasn't it. My mules were rather late in starting, always are after a halt so they didn't get in till 3, however in 25 minutes everything was unpacked & comfy. It is pretty hot marching & there is no doubt marching back from **Keng Tung** to **Taunggyi** you must be prepared to have it hot & the only way of doing it is to start very early 5 o'clock, get in, have breakfast, by that time the mules are in, then have a good sleep in the middle of the day. I wish I could write bed instead of beds, don't you, especially in the cold weather. I don't think I have very far to go tomorrow. This beastly haze spoils the view. There were a lot of little jungle fires on the march today, mostly just the dead leaves burning, it was very hot when the fire was near the path. Just take my accounts for the last ten days or so Rs 4-13-0, And things are very expensive in **Mongpan**, chickens only 5 for a rupee & eggs 2 for an anna. I'm waiting for my bath, so you get the benefit, but it's a little difficult writing, there are a lot of eye flies about. There goes an old brain fever bird. At **Mongpan** in the poongyi chawn near me, call it temple to the children.

“After tea. I've changed my plans & have written to the surveyor to come in here tomorrow morning, so I shall halt here & then march back to **Mongpan** on the 17th (mail comes in on the 18th) and as I have to send the men back with letters the next day I shall only have 3 days more to write this letter. However, sweetheart my letters are much longer than yours, just like I love you much more than you love me. I think I shall go out for my stroll now.

“After dinner. I got within about 50 yards of two jungle cocks crowing at each other, then I heard them rise in the jungle, they are brutes. The best way of keeping one's larder full is to have a keen Gurkha with one, give him the use of your garden & 2 annas for each jungle fowl he brings in. I finished dinner with walnuts & Madeira. My cook made some very inferior bread sauce with my roast chicken. **Margaret** will like to know that my men the other day caught a hare, which I had for dinner, but it came on the table head & all, only skimmed & as a finishing artistic touch, a piece of straw in his mouth. Before I could carve him, I had to turn him round so that he didn't look at me. These small boys in chawn are saying either prayers or lessons, I don't know which. Anyhow they are all shouting as loud as possible. Sometimes they do this at 2 or 3 in the morning. You'll darling, but what about that no. 5. Surely **Margaret** & **Enid** have asked you for another baby brother haven't them (*they*). You don't say anything about the piano, do you use it at all. All I can say is if you are not practising & singing you're a little ass, and I shan't love you a little bit when we meet. I shall have rather a dull day tomorrow, nothing to do. How you can imagine that you have the worst of it indeed is parting is, I don't know. I have the pair of boots that I first got at **Eastbourne**, today. I was an ass, I shall chuck them away, they are loose on my feet & have rubbed me in several places. I always have difficulty with boots. I have only one really comfy pair, that I got at **Tientsin**. I can't walk any distance in them, but they are old & patched & will do they just last out the season. I am fatigued & it's only 8 o'clock. I shall sit & think of you, good night, dearest.

“16th March. I didn't sleep well, for walnuts I think, I won't have any more. It is beautifully cool in this zayat owing to the breeze coming right through, I hope it won't drop. Last night the jungle fires round on the hills were very fine, there were 5 going on. This morning my surveyor turned up & I was occupied with him till breakfast at 9.30. I'm going back to **Mongpan** by a round



about way to see some work, so shall take two days to do it & will find the dak just arrived I expect when I get in. How I should enjoy a day or two halt in this place with you. Let me describe to you this is either at, a good specimen of the wood & plank sort. It's 15 yards long & 6 wide, plank floor & plank walls on 3 sides. On the front side there are 4 pillars like this. They shaded part is planked in the 3 middle bays open, then in front there is an open verandah running all along the front, 4 yards wide. The whole building is about 4 feet from the ground so you go up to it by wooden steps. The best way of dividing it up is to close in one more bay with our big waterproof sheets & partition that off for a bedroom & partition of the one closed bay at the other end as a bathroom. The other two bays being left open for a sitting room. Of course the bamboo ones are not so good. There is no ceiling but the roof is on rafters & thatched. Of course in our permanent headquarters we would have the floor washed & disinfected. You mustn't expect that when we only halt one night. Under the building is generally rather dirty, so we would have it all cleaned out and sand put down. Then I have an office tent, two hospital tents & 3 or 4 Khalassis tents. So you see our headquarters will look rather nice. For kitchen I should get a bamboo shed run up & another for the ponies. How do you like the idea? A mail every week and as you won't be in England to send out Standards we will have one or two Ladies Pictorials for you. When in headquarters we have heaps of tables & chairs & the tent dhumies (?) down on the floor. I will try & get my inspecting work done in Jan. & Feb. so as not to have marching about for you in March, then April we shall march back to **Taunggyi**. Darling how I love to think of things to be nice if you are with me; but when I & all the Khalassis & interpreters have been sweating away to make everything nice, I shall expect to have it appreciated, not for you to hunt about for the failures, which as you know is a little failing of yours. We will arrange to go out inspecting when your ~~ is not on, and get a woman from the village to wash your things, while that suit?

“3.30. Don't tell anyone, but I lay down on my bed at 12 & as the flies were bothersome I pulled down the mosquito curtain & slept off & on till 3. Now I've had tea, two scones, & 2 bananas with jam à la C.H.D.R. & enjoyed it very much. My bed was out of the breeze so I found it rather sweaty, but where I'm sitting it's all right. I remember just before going to sleep calculating that 9 months after August 1903 is May 1904, so no. 5 & **Enid** will have their birthdays much the same time & there'll be 1 year & 9 months between **Lisle** & no. 5, which would be exactly right if no. 5 is a boy. Don't you hope no. 5 will be a boy. I mean we don't want any more girls & we're both longing for **Lisle** to have a brother. How pleased your mother will be. Dr Colgate too. May will be an excellent time just at the beginning of the summer; so I suppose I may look on it as settled that you agree, anyhow it doesn't make the least difference whether you agree or not, alone I can do it. Only this time I hope you will be good before & go out so that the baby doesn't have jaundice & afterward eat properly, so that you can be a good mother. Speaking seriously I think it is about 4 to 1 that our meeting will have this result; that's one reason why I'm hoping to get my officiating step. Then Dr Colgate is cheap & we have a good nurse who can look after two babies all right. So what argument have you got against it. You know you're fond of your babies once they're born & if you had had your say, you wouldn't have had any at all. In fact it's no good arguing about it any more, because I have settled that you are to have another. You look a darling & I love you 10 times more when you are that way. I write you much longer letters when I'm away by myself; you mustn't expect so much from **Bangalore**.

“After dinner. Just as I began dinner so did the poongyi boys begin their lessons, so I can't go to bed yet. I've just written a letter to Miss Richards, whom I chaperoned out, now Mrs Evatt, to remind her she promised me an R.E. knitted tie; I don't see why I shouldn't get something for my trouble. I am going to try for any real early start to do my march when it's decently cool. I'm curious to see when my boy will wake me, it takes me 35 minutes from the moment I get up, dress, have breakfast & have my

things packed; though I shall not expect quite so quick a time from you. Darling, goodnight & God bless you. I adore you even if you won't have no. 5.

“March 17. Bad night last night, just like the night before, so I was awake & glad to get up when my boy came at ¼ to 5 & I got off at 5.20, so I had a good hour's walk before sunrise & got in here in 3 hours. In the early morning the partridges & jungle cock were yelling all round, but I never got a shot; if I had been a little quicker I might have got a shot once. Then in one place my guide stopped & pointed & everyone said “Sher. Sher” (that's tiger), however it certainly wasn't a tiger, it might have been a leopard, it was about 100 yards of going as hard as possible. Mr Stotesbury whose work I came to see is about 3 miles away, so I'm going over this evening & have told him to come half way to meet me. I am suffering from what I call “hot head”; it isn't headache quite, but my head & neck of hot, & it generally comes from something not quite agreeing with one, a pill & a good sleep cure the complaint. It's only 11 o'clock, & I've had breakfast or lunch. Today I'm in one of the bamboo zayats, very inferior & the thatch is so thin, patches of sun come through so I am wearing my topi. I fancy I shall do a sleep soon. I get in to **Mongpan** tomorrow, it looks about 4 hours on the map. Then for a dak & you will be neglected, but still you get more letters than you deserve. There's a nice breeze here, but still I'm sitting in my pyjamas. When I'm by myself I love pyjamas, everything so easy & comfy; however when you are with me I shall wear this white shirt & Assam silk coat. I've got a good deal thinner; I'm curious to weigh myself as I go through Madras. I think I shall buy a bike in Bangalore & sell it when I leave, it will do me good the exercise & then I'd needn't keep a 60/- a month carriage. I suppose I shall (*play*) golf most evenings. Try & get tennis, I'd like to play when I get home; and after a little practice I shall be all right. General Galway is a distinguished R.E., he was governor of some of our colonies. I daresay you are wise and in not being so keen on no. 5 as I am, still I should 20 years hence be delighted to have my two sons. I haven't had any especial luck in my own career, and so as I haven't done much myself, I should like my sons to do better, but still as you have to have all the pain & trouble, it's for you to call the tune, and you've been such a darling in giving me four; but they are all such fine and jolly children, that makes me feel inclined to go on; however perhaps we couldn't have any more if we tried. The last one took some getting didn't he. Now I'm going to lie down with a Shan book, which will soon send me to sleep.

“Thank you, I hadn't a bad sleep, & it's now 2. I've just sent for some more mats as the sun has shifted round & is peeping at my table again through chinks in the thatch. I can't have tea quite yet; but I rather wish I was having lunch, however it's much better not. Too much meat in did climb its is not good. My hot head is much better thank you. You will like the accounts out in camp, one knows exactly how one stands. I have no bills unpaid & only an account with the bank & an account with my office. My account with the bank is simple, because I have no occasion for drawing cheques, only my pay bills are sent there, and on the other side is the £50 sent home each month, which I always call Rs 750³¹. You will be interested in the little balance sheets I draw up at the end of each month. I always know how my account with my office stands, because on one side is my travelling allowance & on the other deductions for mules, my advance I've taken & any money orders or U.P. parcels; so my accounts come right exactly except now & again. I've spent 8 annas or so that I have forgotten to put down; so far this month I have spent Rs 15-1-0. I think you will be pleased when we are out here together that we are actually saving. To keep the sun out the breeze has also been kept out, so it's hot & I'm longing for my tea. At ½ past 4 I must start out, so I think I'll postpone my bath till I come back. When I get into **Mongpan** tomorrow I shall not have much time for writing to you, except just to answer anything necessary in your letter. I don't like the idea that you're having to march in this heat; my pen runs very badly because the ink dries on it.

“After dinner. I started out at 4.15 & got back at 6.30 as I had some little time at Mr Stotesbury's camp, he is dead not very prepossessing Eurasian youth. I came back with a bundle of split bamboos as a torch, but I got him just before it was necessary. My little trip gave me a thirst, so I had two sparklets for dinner & it's only ½ past 7, you will get the benefit in half an hour or so's letter, unless I think of

31 An exchange rate of 7½ rupees to the pound.

somebody else who ought to be written to; because I think my letters to you are too long, you don't appreciate them, and you never write & tell me what you think of no. 5 & that you love me because I'm the father of 1. 2. 3 & 4, because that is one of the reasons why I adore you. I'm sure if you hadn't had them you wouldn't have been half so loveable, you would have been a much worse flirt; to be your much sweeter in your own house surrounded by your children than in a ball room, but then I suppose I'm an old stupid; but darling, how I do adore you. I hope I shall sleep well tonight, as I'm going to make an early start tomorrow. I have several things to see in **Mongpan**³², which will occupy me till the mail comes in. How I'm looking forward to another letter from you, especially as you will now be getting my longer jungle letters, which will work you up into longer answers.

“March 18. I had four hours walk in here & need I say how happy & delighted I am with your long sweet letter ending Feb. 13. Thank Margaret & Enid for their letters. I'm sorry your cook & housemaid are not staying. I believe you would be wiser to have your evening meal called supper, so as not to have so much cooking; two dinners in the day is a good deal. I had a letter from Colonel Gore, telling me the arrangements he had made on my going on leave, so there is evidently no doubt about my getting it all right; probably Renny is to be recalled from leave, so I'm afraid I shall not get my the officiating step, never mind can't be helped. I hold here tomorrow and send of mail by midday, so I shall have time to write more tomorrow. I'm rather sleepy, because I woke at 3 & stayed awake, now it's 9; but I'm very extra in love with you because you're letter is long & loving. I am delighted at your singing lessons; if only you will practice regularly. You seem to be having a gay old time; it's a good thing to be busy & to know lots of people, it will make the time pass more quickly. All right, never mind about **Stevenage**, but sit tight at **Eastbourne**. Couldn't **Margaret & Enid** have something lessons; if they learn to swim young, it comes natural & then they are like fish in the water & why shouldn't you learn, then we will all go to the mixed bathing part & bathe together. On the 20th I leave here & go back one march from **Mongnai** (?**Mongpan**) (2 days from here) then branch of to see some work & reach **Mongnai** at the end of the month. The Standards arrive very regularly, only one week missed; thanks many for sending them. I shall read your letter again with my chota hazri. I love to think of you sitting in bed writing to the; I only wish I could be with you and I should keep you better employed. Darling, I'm so sorry you counted on my coming in June. I were so delighted at knowing that my leave was safe, that I was satisfied with August; besides it will make two months more difference in age between Lisle & no. 5. How unkind of you to have the poor little man vaccinated when I wasn't there to protect him. You should always tell me when my last letter ended then I know how far I'd got on my journeys. My dear, what a thing love is to talk of my blue eyes, fair skin & pretty hair, when I'm short sighted, freckly & red haired. Don't trouble about my last pay certificate, it's all right. I should be rather glad if you had a French housemaid, I could practice my French on her, because I want is possible to pass in French while I'm at home. I hope you won't send the R.E. journal to **Una**, because in that lecture I mentioned about the fly in the Green Chartreuse. Of course you may sing in the concert; I am only too pleased darling, and then you shall sing to me, in our own house & our own piano. On the “Qui vive” my dear; yes I did chuckle at Margarets remark. I'm puzzling over “Fintures”, sweetheart, oh! now I see fuchsias. You're a darling. I don't know about deducting rates & taxes, we pay all ordinary ones, Ida. Just been reading your letter again, it is sweet & you all the very best & sweetest of darling wives in the world, my whole heart is yours and I'm more in love with you than ever; now I am looking forward to seeing you again & what a happy meeting we shall have. We're getting on through old March, the only consolation for letters taking a long time is to feel that it will be near the end of April when you get this. Darling, when I look around at other married couples with their usual one child how happy I am to think of our four & what a perfectly adorable darling you have been to give them to me; no words can adequately express my love & devotion to you, but it's not half what you deserve. You're just the sweetest most kissable little darling under the sun. Now tell me after that don't you feel inclined to have no. 5. Goodnight my pretty darling.

“March 19. I read your letter again in bed & then had it under my pillow & read with my tea first thing

³² Latitude 20.316667° N, Longitude 98.366667° E

this morning. Now I've polished off all my letters except this one. Dear heart, if you could just peep in & see how happy I am when any good love letter comes in, we would kiss for 10 minutes without stopping. You are a real darling, I long for each day to pass to bring us nearer to our meeting, when I'm afraid I shall be very naughty indeed, but you won't mind, because you love me so much, in fact you might be a little naughty yourself without doing yourself much harm, only a little uncomfortable for 9 months. Now, darling, the post must go. My very fondest love & heaps & heaps of kisses all over you; you'll know what that means. Don't you love to think that this time next year if you love me very much when we meet you may be 7 months gone! God bless you darling, ever Your adoring lover & husband & father of Your 4 chicks. Charlie.

“Kisses & love to our 4.”

20th March, Camp, to Ida: “My own sweet darling, One march homeward & a good long one though the road was level & good. I started at 6.15 & got in at 11.30. I now have my chair carried along with me a great improvement & with a couple of Pioneers I passed the time very comfortably. It was pretty hot, but it will be still hotter tomorrow & for the next week or so till I get to **Mongnai**. Then I had a doze on my bed, bath, tea & a read & here I am. I've been reading “Temporal Power” by Marie Corellie, lent me by Mr Kelly; it's a powerful book & the first of hers I've read. Darling, I don't feel very much like writing today. I don't know why, the heat perhaps but it will be cooler soon, as its ½ past 5. I put my watch on ¼ hour, as I think it has been losing. Marching in this haze is not interesting, except near the streams. The trees looked like a winter at home, all the leaves off or dead. In “Temporal Power” the Crown Prince marries a girl of the people, who thinks he is a sailor. In a song she is always singing comes the following –

My king crowned me
and I and he
are one till the world shall cease to be.

Which has also got into my head. Dear heart, I apply them to you & me.

March 21. Hot! I'm sitting in flannel trousers & vest & there is a strong hot wind blowing in. Hurrah! I shot a jungle cock; one began to crow near the path, so I went around to try & catch him, but he went off, so back I came & my khalassis pointed me out another sitting on a bush. I could just see him through thick jungle & bowled him over; then later on I saw 6 feeding in an old field, walked them up, however when they saw me they ran & I fired at one & missed him. I met Gordon (one of the **Taunggyi** civilians) on the march. I thought I should have found him here. He told me he had put off the box of 25 Shan Lily bulbs, you remember the sort, big white bell shaped, with a little yellow in the middle. I hope they will be a success. This is a hot valley & hot I shall be for some days, however I'm very fit thanks. I started at 5.45, in at 10.30; then I sat in my chair reading a Standard, then had lunch; at 12.30 my mules came in, they were delayed having to ferry across the river then about 1.30 I lay down & dozed off till nearly 4, up, bath & shave, tea & here I am. I am glad of this wind it's cleared the haze a bit this evening. You would be very comfy in this zayat. The hot wind just reminds me of the hot weather wind at **Bara Banki** only not so bad. I've a little pimple in my ear I should like you to look at & tell me about, but you never take any interest in those things. I thought last night I was in for a toothache, but I slept it off. My vest I have on is not one of those you put fresh silk down the front & it is in rags. I hope this time when I come home my things will be looked after better; I must say I was neglected then & in **Bangalore** worse!

Finished an interview with the head man. I don't fancy I have a very long march tomorrow, but a goodish one next day. Starting as I do, so early I get a good 1½ hours quite cool. Coming back from **Keng Tung** you & I must start about 5, finish the march by 9 or 10, & then have a good sleep in the day. I have a fine medicine box (Govt) with all sorts of medicines in it, but I've so far only used 2 opening pills.

“10.30 pm. Funny old Charlie, I went to bed at 8.30 but couldn't get to sleep, so I've got up and lit a

cheroot, got myself some lime juice & water & am very comfortable thank you. There are some fine jungle fires on the hills, one I watched from my bed. It's not a whole hillside on fire at the same time, but a long line gradually creeping along. I don't want any blankets over me tonight & last night I had two. The height here is only about 900 ft above the sea. **Mongnai** is 2,800, so there's a difference. The midday sleep is a nuisance if it's going to keep me awake at nights. What a poor existence it is away from you, sweetheart; I wonder if you ever realise the utter loneliness of so much of my life. The river is close by, there are a lot of big water wheels to bring the water up onto the fields. I can hear them groaning now. Nobody loves me. I'm longing to see my 4 chicks. I hope **Violet** is behaving well now. Does Miss Fenn keep them in good order? I really think you would be wiser to make the evening meal into supper, finish up scraps & only perhaps have hot potatoes; I rather like see Sunday meal & you would save a lot I'm sure, besides getting cooks to stay with you. I'm very glad your joining in things & getting to know people, it gives one more to do; but one thing, Ida, I do hope you've got out your bike. I'm sure Mildred Reid or someone will take you about, because I do want to go for a country rides with you sometimes; and don't forget to see my bike is kept well cleaned & covered with vaseline, thick. Tell me all your hours & how nurse has her meals, does Miss Fenn dine with you & tell me what she is like. I will bring home the Japanese tea & coffee set if you like. I want to reorganise all our packed boxes at **Bangalore**, because I had to pack them in a hurry, while you flirted with Jim & I don't know where anything is; it's 11 o'clock, but I don't feel sleepy. I am writing slowly, thinking a bit, then writing a bit. I am called before 5, so I haven't got very long to sleep. You have heaps to write about, but I haven't much, however I love & adore you more than ever and now I am looking forward to a sight of your pretty face again, even if you don't want no. 5. I expect to get a dak on the 25th, it will reach the village I get to tomorrow on the 24th. Now goodnight my darling, God bless you. What a lovely happy meeting we shall have.

“March 22. I had a very pretty march along the banks a good part of the way of (*sic*) the river I crossed yesterday, with green shady trees, but it was hot & the last ½ hour was very hot coming across dry paddy fields. However when I got here, I found not only the surveyor I expected, but two others who had finished their work. This shortens my round considerably. Tomorrow I march to **Mawkmai**³³ a town & then two marches into **Mongnai**. I didn't sleep restfully even after getting up & writing to you. It was the change to the heat, here it's just as hot & I'm in a zayat with a very thin thatch. I must send in a letter to alter my dak. I told them to send it here, now it must go from **Mongnai** towards **Mawkmai** & I shall meet it halfway the day after tomorrow, so I haven't long to wait. When there's a breeze all the little bells on the spires of the pagoda near here tinkle, it's rather pretty. I found a nice room partitioned off in the zayat with mats, but I think it's hotter inside, anyhow I'm sitting in pyjamas sweating hard.

“6 pm. I've just been having a long talk with one of the surveyors who was with us in **Peking**, then the head man came to pay me a visit, as they always bring fruit of sorts. They are welcome. However I opened a tin of pears today; my! they are galopsious (?). I'm sure you won't like them & so I won't have to share them with you. I'm having my room pulled down to let the air in. I'm sitting in the verandah now & I've just been watching (*sic*) climbing up a coconut palm tree, there are no coconuts yet though. Hurrah! only tomorrow & then the day after a letter from you. I'm getting the benefit of my longer jungle letters in long letters from you; perhaps next one will only be a short one though.

“After dinner. I had rather a field day, fish, fresh from the river, but rather uninteresting, my jungle fowl, it would be a little gamier if I had kept it another day, a second, & tinned pears; a dinner fit for a king & I feel comfortable. There is a strong breeze but unfortunately I'm sheltered from it. I have one range to climb tomorrow & the path is said to be stony, however I was told it was shorter than today's march. People went into **Mawkmai** for the bazaar & came back the same day, which they couldn't do to where I came from today. I often think of you when I'm asking the distance to a place from the Shans, they have no idea of distance or time in miles or hours, one can only get out of them the following gradations “very far”, “far”, “not very far”, “not far” & “near”. The connection with you is when we were marching into **Simla**, you got so angry with me when I told you it was an hour's march or ½ an

33 Latitude 20.227895°N, Longitude 97.724018°S

hour's march, instead of saying so many miles. Do you remember? There are 8, ½ pears in a tin, that just lasts the two days, 2 for dinner & 2 for lunch each day. I wonder if you will like my meal arrangements, you can always alter them. I don't have any tea before getting up, but when I'm dressed I have porridge & some eggs, toast or chipatti, butter & jam & to drink either cocoa or coffee. Then I have carried with me cold chicken, potatoes & vegetable & pickle, remains of yesterday's pudding & some fruit, this I have about 12. At 3 or ½ past I have tea & dinner at 7. Lunch I have cold, but if you like to wait a bit any day when the march is not long one can have it warmed up by waiting till the mules come in. With you, I should have a table, two chairs & a Chilinchi with sponge &c. in it & towel carried with us. I am a great believer in having meals at regular hours, because malarial fever may come from mosquitoes &c. but one can easily get ordinary fever from exhaustion & over exposure to the sun. There is one thing we must bring that I haven't got with me & that is a mincing machine. This cook's one weak point is his bread. I suppose for you we shall have to have a lot of biscuits; and you must decide on the sort. Bath Olivers are the only sort I ever use myself. This is rather full of food this letter, so having fed the body, let us fill the mind with their little lovemaking. Do you know, Ida, that I still have to meet someone prettier than you, I haven't yet. How I adore your face. You have undoubtedly most lovely eyes & how I do love them particularly when they are looking at me. You're the prettiest sweetest darling in the world. I'm going to read a little now before going to bed, it's only 8.15 now. I'm very thirsty, must have a drink out of my goblet of water.

“March 23. I'm in luxury in a bungalow. I found one of my 3 surveyors, another has gone into **Mongnai** & the third is somewhere near here, I've sent off to find him. I feel rather tempted to stay here a day; I may have to do, to see the 3rd surveyor; but if I stay here I shall not get my dak till the evening. I had a very hot climb up hill on the march, otherwise it was plain sailing. I got in at 10, but I waited to have lunch till my things came in. It is much cooler here & a nice breeze blowing through the bungalow. I expect I shall have a sleep this afternoon, but it's only ½ past 12 now. If the haze clears off in the evening I may go out to see some work near here. This is quite a large place, a long struggling village about the size of **Mongnai**, a small stream about 20 yards wide which I forded on my pony. There where 4 small boys having such fun swimming about & holding on to a plantain tree trunk & floating with it down a little rapid & then tugging it up again. This bungalow has been built by the Tsawbwa. How you will enjoy a bungalow after zayats & tents. If you were here we should certainly stop here 2 or 3 days & I think I should make love to you tonight. I've just been looking at the paper of exam marks again, top in each of the three subjects of the 9 of us in the Chatham Class wasn't bad. The order in totals was Ryder, Rushton, Brunner, Smyth, Saunders, Crosthwait, Cameron, McElhinny, Blakeway. I'm quite pleased with myself. I've been presented with a big watermelon, I hope it will be good. I shall go for it at tea. I didn't get to sleep last night, and so had a good think about you, how I love to think of you is to imagine you are sitting in bed in a chemise, very improper isn't it. I always think a chemise is much prettier than a night down, because it is cut low & loose. The height here is 1,600 ft above sea at **Mongnai** 2,800 so that it will be cooler there. There is a jheel³⁴ there onto which the ducks are said to come about this time, so I may get some shooting. I shall be there quite 10 days or so I expect, then another dak will come in on the 30th. My sleep was successful, I dropped off but sweated so much I woke up and got up about 2.30, since then I've been footling about & it's now 3.30 & hot. It is rather unlucky that this year we are closing work rather early when it is the one year I should like to have stayed out as long as possible; because I don't fancy **Bangalore** on Rs 370 a month & trying to save out of that. I wonder whether you would do this for me, right at once to Hope Brothers for patterns for a suit for me, made just like my last, only I think I should like a blue with thin white lines you know the sort. I leave it to you, and then nothing like (*light*) in colour it gets dirty so quick & have some regard to the price. Tell them to send it out quick to **Bangalore**, not double breasted, my last wasn't & it was very nice. I wanted in Bangalore & I want it on the voyage & double breasted is so hot darling. Do you mind very much. I'll have a double breasted if you like, as I have one of the other sort. The only peculiar thing they did in my last suit, was that they gave me no outside

34 A pool, marsh, or lake esp. remaining from inundation.

breast pocket, tell them it's very inconvenient. Time for my bath. 5 o'clock.

"I'm going out shortly to put up the surveyor's plane table near here & then after that is the Sawbwa is coming to pay me a visit; so I shall have my time occupied till dinner time. There's no doubt you will find it hot marching back with me, but you don't mind the heat so much as the cold, or is it the other way on, or is it that you dislike most which ever is occurring just then.

"Marie Corelli has three beautiful women in her book, "Temporal Power" in describing each of them she refers to the beautiful curve of of the full rounded bosom, so you wouldn't be any use there; but you're good enough for me, especially if you agree to no. 5. Do you agree. You have still another 15 years in which you can have babies, so I shouldn't be at all surprised if we reached the old fashioned eight in the end. You know, I suppose that 8 at least is the number that every woman was supposed to have in old days, and I am old fashioned. Hot, my dear, hot, however a nice little breeze is springing up & I shall want a blanket over me, if I have all the days (*sic*) & windows open; that is where you & your sex always come off badly, not being able to sleep out of doors.

"After dinner. Dinner has made me perspire, However I'm not surprised because I had 2 whiskeys & waters. How often do I think of our being together in these parts. How I shall do adore you more than ever, if you take the rough & smooth smiling & prove yourself a good camp companion. Of course you will have a rough time, but if you could understand the difference it will make to me, for love of me you would put up with anything. Anyhow I shall do my best to make things come through for you, and as at first you will have bungalows you will gradually (*get*) accustomed to the life. I expect my mules and I will get into camp tomorrow together & the dak should arrive at the same time, as it is half way to **Mongnai**. I hear that there is no village, but a good zayat. Today is Monday, so I shall reach **Mongnai** on Wednesday & as the post closes on Thursday evening I shall be in nice time for it. As I get nearer the (*sic*) I shouldn't be surprised if two of my letters went to you by the same post, in which case you won't have time to read them. Do you read my letters more than once, I wonder? There aren't mosquitoes, however I've defeated them with two pairs of socks. I often think over the dhobi difficulty & wonder what will be best to do. Hurrah! there's a breeze now & again & I'm cooling down. Dear heart, how I'm looking forward to my dak tomorrow, then with letters & papers &c. you will be rather neglected. Why is it I is so often think of no. 5, especially if there's anything extra loving in your letters. Dear heart, a little read & then to bed, alone alas! Goodnight.

"March 24. Where is my dak. I had rather an outing, as I went by a round about way to another surveyor, found his work bad, then to get back onto the main path we found a fine young irrigation channel 5 feet deep & no means of crossing, so we had to go and long way round. However I got in by 12. What a nice place this would be in the cold weather, two good zayats in the jungle amongst bamboo clumps. Of course the first question I asked when I got in was, where is my dak. I can't think why it hasn't arrived; never mind I must anyhow get it tomorrow, but I feel as if I should appreciate it today.

"5 pm. I had just dropped off to sleep when the beastly dak came & woke me up with a beautiful letter from you, pages. I've only read it through once it, but it's a darling letter & I am very happy with it, as happy as I can be away from you. Then I've just filled my pen with ink; I do it so cleverly now without getting any onto my hands. I had two pages from **Father**³⁵ with all the news of the boys; he says he doesn't think **Ted**³⁶ is coming home. There still seem to be rows about the repairs & lease of Orchard Court and he also says they may go to the seaside, but "if we are here it will be awfully jolly to have you all with us". So as regards letting the house & going there I leave it to you; if you possibly can do so, it will be like an extra £50 to us which we want badly. I also had a letter from Cox saying on 16th Feb. We were £53-16-3 overdrawn; but now I've sent home £100, & next mail after this another £50, but still there's no doubt you can't live on £50 a month and also that is all I can send home, leaving myself enough to take my return ticket; however I see you are doing all you can. One thing, darling, I would try & that is giving up late dinner; it is hard work on the cook giving too hot dinners per day & we can't

35 Her father, Colonel Edward Evans Grigg 1844-1909.

36 Edward Taylor Grigg 1871-1936, Ida's eldest brother who settled in Ceylon as a tea planter.

have expensive servants. What is the good of having a £22 housemaid if she won't stop. I'm afraid no. 5 will not come, solely on account of expense, but still there is no harm wishing we could have another son. I had a letter from a **Wilfred** congratulating me on my lecture; he had just been with **Tempé** to **Julhundur** (?) To consult a specialist, who says she is quite recovered; he also says **Joan**³⁷ is sometimes very like me in good looks; she must be the Belle of **Dharmsala** mustn't she. Then I had a letter from **Mary**³⁸ mostly about the books of mine she is still hunting out & collecting & making lists of.

“These blue lined envelopes are good for not being able to see through, but the edges are weak, yours came today with one edge quite open. Five pages, you are a darling. I shall not have much time to write tomorrow because whenever I get into headquarters there is always some official work to be seen to. My last few had got was written on the road up to Taunggyi. I'm glad you've at last confessed you do miss my “wilfulness” (what a good word) by won't remind you of it, but still I love you more than ever now. You've read my letters just like I do yours, once through very quickly to see all is well and then I read it through as I am writing to you & then have it under my pillow or in my pocket on the march to read at odd moments. You don't tell me Lisle's weight now, as he exhausted your means of weighing him. I'm glad you are getting interested in the camping. There is some fine scenery in the cold weather, but now everything is hazy, hot & dried up, except in the river valleys, which are green but hot. The great advantage of keeping accounts is to see where you can save. Hullo! did I decide in my letter that we won't have any more babies, well, you will by now have received plenty of letters pointing out the other side of the question. I shall love to mint (?) with you; and I'm glad Mrs Reid wants you to bike, if you to a short ride daily, Ida; you will find that you can do more & more without the least fatigue. Bike out to the new park & back to begin with. Because I love riding about the country, but once you with me. My dear if Mr Weyner is not a nice man much better drop the Badminton at the end of your subscription; we shall have lots to do together without it. Darling, I'm afraid I can't get away before August, I wish I could. I wonder if you will spoil me when I come home. You often in your letters say you will, but alas! when I come, no spoiling do I see. I don't think you will find the milk in camp unpleasant; we can have goats at our headquarters & the new unsweetened milk is really very pleasant, more of that taste that the old Swiss milk used to have. As a butter is all right when it's cold, but from now onwards while on the march it is quite uneatable; it all melts. You never sent me Miss Ross **Tommy's**³⁹ letter. Yes, **Margaret's** is a very sweet letter, she is a dear little daughter to us. It's much cooler here. Do you remember what a violent temper **Margaret** had & yet what a sweet nature she has now. You'll be getting conceited if I write too much; so I think I shall light a pipe; you'll be thinking you're a darling & the sweetest & prettiest wife in the world. My dear heart, how is one (*to*) combine the following; always have you with me, have a large family, do exploring expeditions & have plenty of money to spend on ourselves; can you suggest a way? I know you'll would say don't have a large family, but that is one of the most important things. Daughters go & marry & have other names; but sons carry on the name and I should like my sons to succeed in things where I have failed.

“March 26. Yesterday I got into **Mongnai** in about four hours & chose a place for my camp under a big tree. I have my own tent & then an outer fly office tent over which I have a thatched roof being built now. All dead leaves & jungle cleared & everything very nice & I wish you were here. My men are camped the other side of the town, quite a large camp as the surveyors are beginning to come in. I was kept busy all the middle of the day & then the missionary & his wife Dr Henderson, asked me to tea. They were present American & have just sent me over a loaf of bread. He came this morning & tapped one of the Khalassis, bored a little hole in his stomach, put in a pipe & a whole bucket full of water came out, most extraordinary. I enjoyed the feeling of not marching & it is not hot. I think I shall stay about 10 days or so here. I'm feeling very well, darling; another mail will come in here on the 30th. I hope I didn't miss any mails. I've done my best; it re-acts on me, because when you don't get long letters from me then your letters are shorter. There is a jheel here, I shall go & explore it this afternoon & see whether there are duck on it. Darling heart, how I wish you were here, it would be ten times

37 Wilfred's elder daughter born 15th October 1902.

38 Presumably his older sister.

39 Ida's youngest brother also known as Tommy, Major Stanley Thomas Grigg DSO MC 1842-1948.

more lovely making everything nice for you. God bless you, darling. I'm going to write a letter to **Margaret** now.

“Good-bye sweetheart. I'm longing for kisses & wilfulness generally, forever your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

29th March, Camp, to Ida: “My darling sweetheart, You have been sadly neglected since I came in here. I sent off a letter on the 26th; on the 27th I went out on the jheel shooting. I had to wade out to a place where there were long reeds & then cut some of them down & made myself a dry place to sit on, and sent a surveyor round one side with a gun & khalassis the other side to stir the duck up, then the fun began. There were a lot of duck & I had all flying shots, nearly all single ones. I had only 11 cartridges & could have fired off 40. I got 4 duck & two others I dropped but lost, quite respectable. I got back at 10, quite pleased with myself. That evening Mr Doran & I went over to Dr Henderson, the missionary, to have lessons in bread making. Yesterday I was busy all day almost, partly here & partly in the main camp with office work. Today I've just been out after jungle fowl but saw nothing & it's still early, as I went out at 6. A dak comes in tomorrow I hope; and on the 4th I shall send in the first detachment of my men by cart to **Taunggyi**. I've got my camp in a delightful place. I'm continually interrupted in my writing, and can't get on with my letter; now it's 2 o'clock & I don't think anyone will bother me, but then I'm feeling rather sleepy myself.

“1st April. Hurrah! A new month, but I'm a fine husband & lover only written ½ a page; but the dak ought to have come in on the 30th & it didn't, nor yesterday either, such a nuisance. The nicest time here is the early morning, how I should enjoy a camp like this with you; I've really got everything so comfortable. I spent some time watching a lot of men cleaning out the tank near us. It is filled by a very strong spring, because although it was nearly emptied yesterday, today it is full of again. I generally go for a stroll down to the office camp in the morning & evening. Have breakfast about 10, no lunch, tea at 4 & dinner at 7. I'm rather longing for a good march again & I think I shall go shooting again tomorrow; but you know that unsettled sort of feeling, waiting for the post. I haven't had all given up the idea of no. 5, don't you think it, in fact you will find it mentioned in every one of my letters, up to the last one. I shall post from **Port Said** via **Brindisi**. I wonder whether you think of it as much as I do, I don't suppose you do; the important thing will be what your opinion will be the day we meet. What do you think it will be. Of course if anyone returns from leave earlier than expected that is my only chance of getting home earlier than August. It is bad luck this being such an early finished season, I mean work finished early. I should have liked one day when we don't return to **Bangalore** till the end of May.

“You are (*a*) dear sweet darling. Darling you must take it as a sign of I'm your devoted lover that I think of no. 5; it's my way of being in love with my wife.

“April 2. Something must have happened to the post dak men because now it's 3 days late & none has arrived; this has made me sort of disinclined for writing. I went out shooting duck this morning. I shot 3 in 8 shots flying, but I got into a bad place, or I would have got many more shots. All my men will be in here by the 4th & then go into **Taunggyi** by detachments. I've just had a wire from Pirie to say he goes by the steamer of the 9th May, so I fancy I shall go by that steamer. I've no excuse for staying later. I never felt so stupid for letter writing. From my tent door I can see the path over a hill by which the dak men come, but alas! no signs of them. If I had been by myself in the jungle I should have had a nice long letter written to you, but with my office & office work & Mr Doran here I can't find a quiet time to myself. Perhaps this evening the dak may come in.

“4.30. No dak, yet so disappointing. I am sending in with this mail my pay bills & an order on the Madras Bangalore, to send a second £100 to Cox, which they will receive a week or so after this letter, which I hope will quiet them. I had nearly sent you two months' allowance in one. I wish I could send you home some amount each month that you could save a little out of, but what can't be, can't be. I'm not sending a single letter by this mail except yours. Now I've all the arranging of sending off the men in detachments & sending away the escort, so unless I can scribble a little this evening this is all you'll

get; but darling, I adore you, and you must forgive me for once in a way having failed to; don't pay me out by writing a short letter in return.

“Darling, just before dinner the dak arrived with a dear sweet letter from you. How I adore you darling. I must leave answering it to next mail, but you shall have a good letter then. God bless you darling. Thank **Margaret & Enid** for their letters & give them all kisses from me; as for you, you little darling, nothing is good enough for you & I would hope you till you asked me to stop. Kisses “all over” to your dear self & heaps of love, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

4th April, Camp, to Ida: “My own sweet darling, This letter I expect will last me into **Taunggyi**. I've sent off 20 carts about ½ the party today & the rest go on 6th. The mail should come in on the 6th & then I shall go off next day; or the day after the mail comes in anyhow. It will take me 6 days to march to **Taunggyi**. Now I've got 4 pages of yours ending Feb. 27, which I hadn't time to answer in my last. You had heard about my hurting my foot. When you go out in the evening the best plan is to walk back, taking walking shoes with you, you economise half the fare. I'm so glad you've taken to golf again, play as much as you can because you won't be able to when no. 5 begins to make its presence felt. I do hope you will practise, darling I am very glad you are having singing lessons & if you don't practise constantly now you have a piano it will be a wicked waste of your opportunities. I'm glad Puttick & Simpson are going to soul the Torture pictures at last, about the book covers no hurry, write now & again to Larkin, don't forget he has two rolls of silk as well; you might suggest his selling the book covers a view at a time, but not under £2 each. We must stick to that. If Mrs Reid is surprised at your having four, what will she say when she knows you're expecting to have no. 5, & her longing for me to come home for that reason. **Lisle** must be getting a fine big chap; I'm so glad his squinting has gone; I do hope he will not be short sighted. **Una** sent me a long catalogue of books, relics of **Hambleden**, which she & Mary are dividing up & I have to choose the order in which I prefer them. There are about 72 books & 150 volumes; it's rather difficult some of the books I remember some I don't. I shall be quite glad to get on the march again; but you would be quite happy here I think, anyhow I should be happy if only you were here. Don't you ever feel inclined to have no. 5, not even when you get an extra loving letter from me. With every baby my love for you gets ever so much deeper, but I quite realise, my darling I mustn't ask too much of you. You seem to have plenty to do in **Eastbourne** which is a good thing. I'm so glad Mother is coming to stay with you. You might ask **Blanche**⁴⁰ next. I've just spent about an hour going through & marking **Una's** catalogue. It was rather a difficult job. It gets warmer each day but still very pleasant under the shade of bigotry, but hold out in the sun. I weighed myself at the Post Office here, of course it wasn't very accurate but I weighed 13 stone 8 lbs. 5 lbs lighter than when in **Madras**. I think I'm a lighter them that though.

“April 5. The only excitement this morning is that my basket of 5 chickens & some of the men's brass pots have been stolen. I'm rather headachey this morning. Do you know, Ida, in this country I feel more & more learning to become almost a teetotaller. I've been noticing that when I take my glass of Madeira in addition to my whiskey & soda I always feel it slightly next morning. I sat up late last night reading, and didn't wake till 7.30. I shouldn't have woken then only my men began splashing water to lay the dust and the tents, but the whole night I never slept soundly. I'm just going to be on the march again. I shall start from here on the 8th & reach **Taunggyi** on the 13th. I think it's a sort of neuralgia I've got, because it starts from one old tooth & all up one side of the head. However it's not much to bother about, only it checks the flow of a letter rather.

April 6. 6.30 am. This is the best time for me to write, while you are sleeping like a little hog. This is really a very pretty camp. I was thinking of know. 5 this morning & wondering what you would decide. I don't suppose you will decide to have one but I wish you would, now I would do adore you if you did & when we're old how glad we shall be. We shall then wish we had 10. Most of the camp go off today, by the cart road, but the mule road is 4 days shorter, so although I start on the 8th I shan't get in two days before this lot. I only hope the dak won't be delayed like it was last week. I'm afraid my lonely

40 Ida's sister 1878-1974.

jungle letters will soon be coming to an end, but still you must remember that two pages of yours are no longer than one page of mine. Surely, Ida, you will like to have another son. I saw in the papers Ida, Ferard had a daughter. It's a dull hazy morning, I think we shall have rain in a few days. Darling heart, how I am longing to be with you again. I suppose I think over our meeting every night before going to sleep.

“April 7. Another letter of yours came in yesterday evening, so I'm revelling, ending March 6. Just a month; now as I get nearer so will your letters take less time. You are a darling & I love you like anything, but today I have to be making all my preparations for moving again as we start tomorrow; and it's no use posting this here, but I will add **Mongpaw**, 4 days from here & 3 from **Taunggyi**. In other letters my news is that Major Bythell is going on leave, which will give me my officiating promotion, 300 Rs a month extra, but only from 1st August, and not then if Col. Renny is recalled. **Una** in her letter to me says she wishes to pay **Wilfred** & me rent for the house from now onwards; how the dickens they will find the money for this I don't know. Don't repeat this to anyone. Of course I am writing back to say I don't want it. Cheques for £81-4-4 in February sounds appalling; and although some things won't recur, others take their place. I don't so much mind for now when we can always come out after leave & recoup, but it doesn't look well for the days to come on pension on £700 a year; however I can see you are now doing all you can. Each month you should be able to bring the amount down. There is no doubt however that we shall £300 or £400 (*sic*) to be sold out before we come out to India at the end of my leave. The prospects of young no. 5 don't look so bright. There is thunder strolling round this afternoon, so I fancy it will rain tonight; as long as it doesn't rain on the march it will be very pleasant. I was very amused with Miss Ross Thompson's letter, which I have torn up, also Jim's which is a scrawl. I had a lot of official letters to see to this morning. Then had a look through the Pioneers. How sad about Sir Hector MacDonald⁴¹; don't talk about the case, no details are telegraphed out here, but evidently it is some immoral case; a very sad ending. I shall be quite glad to be on the move again; however I have Mr Doran & Mr Kelly with me, rather a nuisance, as I don't have so much time to myself for writing to you; however from **Taunggyi** I shall send them on in front of me. I say, you might let me see my own lecture, however as you haven't sent it out now, you may keep it. Pirie wrote & said he found it very interesting. I have asked Dr and Mrs Henderson, missionaries, over to our camp to tea. I never sleep very well when the mail comes in, I suppose I get excited. This extra Rs300 will make a difference to us, even if I only get it during my 3 months privilege leave it will mean another £60. Really if it wasn't for our having a house & for young Lisle it would be wiser for you to come out to me than for me to go home, but still I'm coming all the same, only May, June & July to get through. I can't tell exactly what day in August I shall be allowed to go yet. My bath is ready.

“April 9. I've done two marches towards **Taunggyi** & have five more & today I got another mail with yours of March 13. We had only a short march today, so I spent some little time missing two partridges. The way I worked was spotting the tree they called for, then having 5 khalassis & myself in a line, walked up, the partridge dropped down to the ground when we were about 100 yards off, however he had to rise when we got up to him & I missed both times easy shots. Yesterday we were in a bungalow, today under fine trees, but it isn't hot. I shall find another mail waiting for me at **Taunggyi**, so I'm doing myself well. Yours is a dear sweet letter & I'm very happy with it. I thought I'd polish off my newspapers, so as to have no excuse & have a good long letter ready to send in. The day after

⁴¹ Major General **Sir Hector Archibald MacDonald**, KCB, DSO (4 March 1853 – 25 March 1903), also known as **Fighting Mac**, was a distinguished Victorian soldier.

The son of a crofter, MacDonald left school before he was 15, enlisted in the **Gordon Highlanders** as a private at 17, and finished his career as a major general, "one of only a few **British Army** generals who rose from the ranks on his own merit and professionalism." He distinguished himself in action at **Omdurman** (1898), became a popular hero in Scotland and England, and was knighted for his service in the **Second Boer War**. Posted to Ceylon (**Sri Lanka**) as Commander-in-Chief of British forces, he committed suicide in 1903 following accusations of homosexual activity with local boys.

tomorrow I think I shall send a man in ahead of us with letters, as I don't want to just miss the outgoing mail & I don't know when it leaves **Taunggyi**. When I get to **Taunggyi** I shall write to **Calcutta** to know from what date exactly my leave will be sanctioned; it depends on other fellows coming out from home. You darling, how I do love your letters & love you more every letter I get. I shall come home as soon as ever I can, but I don't see how it can be before August. Then we'll have 15 months at home & then come out into camp, about which I'm constantly thinking. I'm so glad you are having Father & Mother. You seem to be getting into the swing of things at **Eastbourne**. Please darling, get out your bike & go in for rides, short at first, then a little longer gradually, so that we can bike together. I do so want to wander about the country roads with you. I'm so sorry for your poor throat. Do you know I seem to have given up those coughing fits & clearing my throat. I hope that China will remain quiet for a few years yet. All you tell me about **Lisle** is delightful; you darling, you don't know how happy I am to have a son at last and such a fine little fellow. There's a strong wind blowing & cloudy, I think we shall have rain, a little would be nice, but I don't want more than a few drops. **Margaret** told me you had received their seats, though you don't mention them. **Enid's** spelling is funny, she never has built her own name right once. I'm sure I've never written anything "naughty". Is wishing to kiss you all over & everywhere naughty? I must find some place at **Eastbourne** the practice shooting. What a lot I'd give to be a good shot, but out here an occasional shot or two is no use. What a delightful happy meeting we shall have, but sweetheart darling dear dear & tell me the date I asked you for, it isn't much to ask, when you've a husband who adores you as I do. I don't get any other news, nothing much in **Una's** or **Mary's** & the rest only officials. I don't quite know how many days I shall stop in **Taunggyi**, but I think 5 days or so just to get another mail. I've sent out men to see if there are any green pigeon roundabout. I love to think that it will be May when you get this letter.

"April 10. A short march today & I missed two more partridges. Ask **Margaret** which she would prefer, that I should miss the partridges & have nothing to eat or kill the poor partridges & have a good dinner. I shall go out this evening after green pigeon. In my tent today, but under big trees, so it's not too hot, but there's a strong wind blowing. You darling, how I am looking forward to our meeting; it will be too lovely for words. I have a "J" (?) pen, that isn't a Mitchell's & is very scratchy. Dear pet, mind you kiss me all day & (night) when we meet. God bless you. Kisses & thanks to **Margaret** & **Enid** for their letters; and heaps of love & kisses I think you know where, from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie."

11th April, Camp, to Ida: "My own sweet darling, You can imagine my delight yesterday evening when I shot a woodcock, they only shot I had. They fly fast too. Today we had an up hill & then down, took 4 hours, got to this place **Mongpaw** at 10 & then at dak came in, unexpectedly; no English mail, but a few Pioneers & uninteresting official letters. The only Private one was from the Madras Bank, Bangalore, saying that they had sent home the first £100 on 30th March; so evidently they have been able to draw my pay all right. There is no use in my keeping money lying idle at Bangalore so each month I shall send home all I have spare, until the last month or so, but at the present moment I have Rs 69 in hand. This is a good bungalow & there is a strong breeze blowing, in fact a bit too strong as I have had to shut one of my windows. I sent in letters today, the man will reach **Taunggyi** tomorrow & then come out again & meet me at **Hopong** one day from **Taunggyi**. Do you remember I grumbled at one weeks Standards not turning up, well, it came this week having wandered about. You had addressed it quite correctly so I forgive you. Only three marches into **Taunggyi** now; but I do wish we were staying out in camp another month, to square up money matters a bit.

"April 12. & past 9 pm. but I had a sleep this afternoon, so as soon as I got into bed I felt I wasn't sleepy, and got up & here I am. It is much cooler here, as this bungalow is over 4,000 ft up, nearly as high as **Taunggyi**. No shooting today, though I went after three partridges, who were shouting at me, but they ran away & I couldn't get them to rise. I hope for a letter from you tomorrow, my darling, and if not certainly the next day. I ought to have told you to address letters now to % Grindlay, & I could have told them to send my letters to where I was. Now I'm afraid I shall miss one mail from you, as the instructions I sent you I made out when I thought I should be going across by the steamer of May 9. I

think that when we come out here we shall not come out along this road, but go by the northern Shan railway & then march. My dear, wouldn't it be too lovely for words being in camp together & all alone, but it will be very difficult for me to be naughty I'm sorry to say. I'm more & more impressed with the fact that Mitchell's are the only "J"'s worth using, this is such a scratchy sort I'm using now. I'm very well, thank you; only longing for you. **Lisle** will be just a year old when I get home. Goodnight, darling, I adore you, but your chest must get more matronly & less like a boy's.

"April 13. A 4 hours march to **Hopong**⁴² & just as we got in, a dak arrived with your most adorable letter ending March 20, so we are getting quite near each other. Your letter about no. 5 has made me love you more than ever. Very well, I will decide, but not yet, out keep you waiting my decision a little longer, at present it is five to one in favour of no. 5 (does that make you love me!)⁴³; All I want you to do is that if I'd decide on no. 5, for you to want it as much as I do, & not to let it make you dread our meeting. If we were stationed somewhere for 5 years I wouldn't hesitate for one moment. There is only one thing is certain, and that is that going on for rough camping as we have two, we couldn't bring out any babies into camp, we must leave them at home; but then that's an argument in favour of having one this time while I have my leave at home. But what makes me love you more than ever, darling, is the sweet way you don't refer to all the trouble, pain & sacrifice it would entail on you and your not mentioning this makes me feel as if you deserved to have no more, and yet how our children do make me worship you. Darling, tell me, in answer to this is exactly what you will feel, if I decide on no. 5; I don't want to be selfish, and I don't want no. 5 (should there be one) to come as the others have, from our dear & tender love for each other. No letter, darling, that you have ever written to me, has made me love you like this one. Having children means giving up certain pleasures now for the pleasures of watching their lives & careers when we are older. I don't know whether you agree with me, dearest, but I think our plan of not just leaving it to chance whether we have children or not, but discussing & thinking about it & then finally deciding, makes me love our children & you much more, very much more. I shall, darling, every night pray God guide me to a right decision. You will darling, write & tell me the date I want & is it 27 days from the beginning of last month's to beginning of this month's. Sweetheart, it is hard for you that your love for me should be rewarded by all those months of discomfort & pain. Wouldn't you have been happier if you had been married to someone who didn't want children. Tell me one more thing, darling little wife, which way do you hope I shall decide; because it is a little hard on me to decide, because of course if I only thought of myself I should decide at once on having another, but then when you so lovingly say you will agree to whatever I decide, that makes me feel so selfish compared to you; and darling you deserve the very best of husbands & I do want your life to be a happy one and I want you to look on our meeting as the very happiest day of your life & not as the possible beginning of 9 months of discomfort. Darling, how I adore you when you are in the family way, how I love to look at you & to think that you are like that, because you love me so much. How I love you to get into your little shall with one of my arms round your neck & the other feeling your stomach & breasts getting larger & larger. It is to me the greatest happiness possible & forgive me for writing about it, but when we are apart, darling there is no chance of whispering my love into your ears, so take this to bed with you & imagine I haven't written it. I've only whispered it to you in the dark.

"5 pm. I've just had tea, and I'm too full of your dear letter to keep away from writing. I wonder whether you felt very much in love with me when you wrote. The difficulty with me in making a decision is that the more in love with you I am the more I want another son. Do you feel the same? Then I may come to a very wise decision not to have one, but whether I could stick to that once I've your little self in my arms would be I should think very doubtful; but anyhow if you saw how happy I am over your letter, you would feel awfully glad you had written it. If you were the husband & I are wife & I had left it to you, sweetheart, what would you decide? I'm afraid there would be no doubt about my decision if you were here now. But darling I want you to think it over and any time you feel

⁴² Latitude 20.797674°N, Longitude 97.176332°S.

⁴³ Ernle as No. 5 wasn't born till 18th April 1906.

against no. 5 write and tell me. For age the two would be just right & **Lisle** will be a year old when I come home, so that there would be a year & 9 months at least between him & no. 5. You darling how I should love to be looking over your shoulder as you read this, do you blush. You are the sweetest & dearest wife anyone ever had. I'm afraid, darling, if no. 5 was started; after the 1st month till about the 5th you wouldn't love me, and it cuts my heart to see you suffering & feel that my offered love & consolation is no help to you. As you can imagine I have read your letter through already 6 or 7 times. What would you say when I asked for no. 6. I think to myself what a shame to take advantage of your love for me; you have done so much more in having 4, than any of our friends; that's one reason amongst many this is why I am so proud of you, and why I think you such a very good wife. Darling heart, how you have won my love. You're just a perfectly adorable darling. To my mind the main objection to no. 5 is that it might lead to our being separated for a camping season. I think we could manage the expense part; the question what is the youngest we could leave a baby at home? If we decide on no. 5 with you promise to be very good & loves me all the time, go out properly & then feed yourself properly, so as to be a good mother when the 9 months are over. Would you have sought new model 10 years ago, as we were marching back into **Simla** that we should now be discussing no. 5. There is one thing is certain that if you ever want another son as much as I do, all difficulties will disappear like smoke. I wish all the world knew what a dear good wife you are, but God knows it. How fortunate I am to have won your love. Sweetheart, I feel as if I'd never loved you as I do now; you will see when we meet. I shall be longing for an answer to this. What will Dr Colgate say?

“9.30 pm. My darling, I've been thinking very hard & although I should dearly love to have another son, I can't put you to all the pain again sweetheart and so we will give up the idea of no. 5; but it's very hard to do so, and you must love me extra much. Goodnight, my pet. I may change my mind tomorrow; but I think you the very best & dearest little wife for having written so sweetly about this.

“April 16. Very busy setting up things. I collected a team & played football against the Gurkhas, we were all survey, myself 4 assistants and 6 natives. They only beat us by one goal, tomorrow we play against **Taunggyi**. It is rather nice being in **Taunggyi** again, with people to talk to. I had dined yesterday with Keen of the Military Police. There is a little club, where I have read papers & played Bridge. One gets good fruit & vegetables. The bungalow I'm in, the circuit house has roses on it; the whole place reminds me rather of **Palampur**. Do you read member we passed through it as we marched back to **Simla**. Don't you think I'm a darling to have decided not to have no. 5, all for your sake, but dear heart all the same I should dearly love to have another boy. I'm longing for another letter from you, you darling. Now I must go off to my office again, settling up the pay & promotions of 300 men takes some time.

“20th April. I've done one march from **Taunggyi** & have to cylinders onto **Thamakan** to catch the post. Mail came in yesterday with your letter of March 27. Tell the Moneys I am delighted at the idea of going to Scotland. Tell **Gordon Money**⁴⁴ I'm a rotten shot. It will be lovely going up won't (*it*) & we'll do a little tour round, blow the expense. It will be another honeymoon for us. Darling, I love & adore you, only I'm a little toothachey, so forgive my not writing more. I played 4 games of football while I was in **Taunggyi**. Heaps of kisses & love you darling. I hope **Enid** will have a happy birthday. God bless you darling. I still stick to my decision to give up no. 5, though I don't half like it. For ever Your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

22nd April, to Ida: “My own sweet darling, I got to **Thamakan** today. It rained yesterday on the march, so today was quite cool. Keene & Robinson of the Military Police were here, so we had ping pong & cricket with a ping pong ball & a sweeper's broom! Your last letter ending March 27 & the Standard came very wet, the Standards almost a mass of pulp. I think your pillar box must leak. I shall hear next mail at **Thazi** how your concert went off. I'm delighted at the idea of going to Scotland, won't it be lovely. It's very good of the Moneys to ask us; if you would like to stop a night or two in **Edinburgh** Col. & Mrs Bailey would be very glad to have us, but I don't know about **Margaret**. There's such a

⁴⁴ Colonel Gordon Lorne Campbell Money 1848-1909, a second cousin of his mother.

strong wind blowing, I've had to shut my door. I hope you're not going out too much, sweetheart; I've seen no sign of socks knitted, but I've managed to get through the season without them; now, thank you, I don't want them. I'm glad you've got a parlourmaid on £10; now I really should try only having supper. My tooth has been troubling me, a sort of neuralgia up one side of my face, it is better today. You will only take 10 minutes getting into bed the night I arrive, see I shall help you! I'm sure, darling, you are doing all you can to keep down expenses. One thing you used to be extravagant over was the grocery bill. The worst of big bills, for clothes &c. is that when one is paid off, something else comes up. I've still to pay my uniform bill £45 or so. I'm so delighted about your taking to singing again, you dear. Tell me about Miss Fenn; it will (*be*) rather a nuisance not having our evening meals & evenings alone, but I suppose it can't be helped; it's a great thing having a good governess & tell me does she keep **Violet** in order. You didn't mention the lampshade before only the egg boiler. What is the former like & have you put it on the standard lamp or where. I wonder if my letters reach you with the ends of the envelopes all soft & worn open, your do so often. I don't think blue lined envelope is strong at the edges. This is such a delightful place, however only two more cool places & then the last 4 marches hot; I'm going to do them in two days; and ought to find a mail waiting for me at **Thazi**, on the 27th. I shall wait there till the 30th & then go up to **Maymyo**⁴⁵ for a week, that is the hill station, but only 3,500 ft, about 40 miles from **Mandalay** by train. I want to go & call on the Lieut. Governor, Chief Secretary & so on. Pirie is up there, then we go across to **Bangalore** together by the steamer of the 9th reaching **Bangalore** on the 13th; then it will be delightful, getting your letters so soon. I think much of you all day, darling. I wonder if you regret my decision about not having no. 5; mind you 20 years hence I expect we shall be sorry we didn't try for another son. The wind is sighing amongst the fir trees just outside my window. I love the sound, it reminds me of the sea; an I long to be with by the seaside. We shall (*have*) more time to ourselves this time, not have to rush off home. Get your bicycle out at once & do a little riding every day; if you only do ½ an hour every day, darling, you will find you don't get a bit tired & it will all come so easy; please do.

“24th. I'm going easily along; a dull uninteresting time, however as each day goes over, I feel glad I'm a day nearer you. This is the last bungalow at a decent height. These bungalows have each a library of old magazines & torn books, which I spend the day reading. My tooth is still worrying, not painful, but I'm aware of its existence. 5 stages, which I shall do in 3, & hurrah! I expect a mail when I get in. Tomorrow I shall be grumbling at the heat. You darling pet, how I'm longing to see your pretty face again. I shall be able to let you know my steamer about a fortnight after I get to Bangalore. I shall know by then what date my leave will be granted, and I hope by then to know the date I want from you!

“29th April. Darling heart, it has been so hot on the 26th & 27th I did two hot double marches in here to the railway & I have had work here paying up the men & everything, however all is finished now & I go off tonight up yo **Maymyo**, leave here at 2.30 am, jolly sort of time to start & reach there at 10.20, only 8 hours. There it will be decently cool & you will get a better letter. Pen bad & ink half dry; so writing is not easy. Your darling letter of April 3 came yesterday. Bravo! getting your month's cheques down to £89; see if you can manage writing a weekly cheque for £8 instead of £10, sometimes. Darling pet, I'm so happy with your long letters. Address now of course to **Bangalore**. God bless you. Kiss the dear chicks for me & take heaps of love & kisses for yourself. Forever Your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.”

2nd May, Maymyo, to Ida: “My own sweet darling, I came up here on the 30th leaving **Thazi** at 2.30 in the morning so I didn't get much sleep that night. I had to change at 6 at **Myoshong** just outside **Mandalay**. The interesting part was where the railway climbed the hills. I had my head out of the window all the time. I got here about 10, drove to the Club where I found Pirie. He had arranged for me to have a room in Rollo's (?) bungalow (he is a superintending engineer P.W.8.) a very nice chap. We have most of our meals at the Club. There is a polo week on, I've had two rounds of golf, playing of course badly. This is a delightful place, and I hope you will enjoy it. Today I went round calling, Bayne, the Chief Secretary, said he thought Sir Hugh Barnes the Lieut. Governor wanted to see me about

45 Latitude 22.034189°N, Longitude 96.469963°S.

Yunnan, however he was engaged today. His wife (Lady Barnes) is sister to Irene & Violet Wanlough (?), However she is at home but another sister, Mrs Mallaby is here. The English mail came in here today, however mind is wandering about somewhere. Pirie goes down on the 6th. I shall go on the 7th probably. Mrs P is expecting in July, just a year between the two. It is delightful getting up here after the heat of the plains. Anyone I'm introduced to here seems to have heard of me & my travels in China; it seems funny to be so well known. Sir Hugh Barnes was Foreign Secretary at **Simla**, that is why he knows about my having been in China. I have to see several people here about survey work. I think from next year we shall always come up this railway & start from 3 or 4 stations beyond here; then at the end of the season we can come in for a week or so before going to **Bangalore**. We can take a box of respectable clothes & leave them here. I don't think I have any particular news. Pirie is as serious as ever, but I rot (?) him a bit which does him good. I heard from **Chuckie**⁴⁶ any few days ago; he seems happy, he may go to **Poona** for a signalling course in July & then I shall see him as I pass through which will be jolly. I'm longing for your next letter; everyone seems so uninteresting to me compared with you. Last night there was a sing song & acting at the Club. Today I heard from Mrs Evatt (the Miss Richards I chaperoned out), but no particular news. I have to get into another months, now there's May, June & July to get through & then for a sight of your pretty face.

“3rd May. I yesterday discovered that the English mail goes today, so I'm afraid this will be a short letter. I dreamt last night no. 5 was a girl; I do hope it will be a boy, don't you. Yesterday afternoon I watched the polo, a good game, played bridge in the evening. I'm longing for a letter from you, darling. I often wonder whether you yourself would like to have a no. 5. I wish I knew, because I then they decided not to have one, because I love you so much I don't want you to go through all that trouble again. You have done it four times, and that's more than I have a right to expect nowadays. I should simply worship you if you gave me another son. God bless you my darling, you of being a dear sweet little wife to me. Heaps of love & kisses from your adoring lover & husband, Charlie.

“I met a brother-in-law of **Wilfred's** yesterday a Major Parsons in civil employ. His voice sounded so exactly like the Parsons I knew in China, who died 2 years ago, that I asked whether his name was Parsons, and he told me that he was nearly rushing up to me greeting me as **Wilfred**.

46 Believed to be a nickname for Ida's youngest brother Tommy (see page 34).