

Fovant Camp
Salisbury England
12.1.1918

My Dear Father,

The sad news has reached me at last of the death of poor Patrick may God rest him. I was so shocked to hear it, would to god it were only me and not him, that God preferred to take but however we cannot have everything our own way in this world I am writing to Mother and telling the truth of my whereabouts: my conscience tells me it is best. I wrote letters to my Poor Dear brother and told him long ago and left it to his discretion to know if it would be best to tell you or not but now since god has willed ti to take him from us I think it is better tell you all.

I know you will be glad to hear that I am in the best of health an that there is no trace of Brighton Disease left in me. It is a disease that no doctor can be fooled in as you can see it and I have been before about twenty different doctors since I came in the military and none of them can find anything the matter with me
I hope you wont blame me for adding another trouble to you and Mother in you old age but by doing this I can see my way through doing something for you and my (Dear dead brother) I am going to make arrangements to allow you to draw three shillings a day while I am in the army and I know that you will spend what you can afford for the repose of the soul of the dear one that is gone

Another reason for me telling you is that I had to make a will of all the money that is deferred from me while in the military and I willed it to you and I believe a copy of it will be sent you later so as long as I went in under my right name and told the truth I cant keep you from knowing it.

I will get eight days leave before departing for the front and I want you to write and tell me if you want to see me.

I heard that a soldier in Ireland was looked down upon at the present time on account of the Sinn Fein Business in Dublin some time ago that is my reason for asking your advice on whether I should go home or not I know from my Poor Brother that you would be glad to see me at any time but I would not want to go there to be slurred by them if they had the experience with Germans that I had they would not look down on a soldier but no more of this talk at present and don't have any unnecessary worry about me it will be six months before I see a front and when I do well god is good to people who imagine that they are fighting a just cause I have no more to say until I hear from you which I hope will be by return mail I will explain all to you then as I will have got over the shock a little good Bye and God Comfort you is the one and only wish of your

Affectionate Son

Eddie

PS Enclosed Please find a Photograph of our Company Picture is marked with a cross over it

E Brennan 7129
Fovant Camp
Salisbury
England

Salisbury Plains
England
12.1.1918

My Dear Mother

Your letter just received I did not get it until today and as I had it sent through Liverpool as I did not want you to know where I was I knew you would be worrying about me but I was leaving it to my Dear deceased brother to break the news to you but as God has pleased himself to take him from us I have now to do it myself. I am passed for deceiving you. I am at present in the address given before under going training before I proceed to the Australian front in France

When I went to Australia we were called out on Strike and I spent what money I had and was left on the street not exactly out on the street to sleep as the Woman I was boarding with was a fine woman but I did not want to sponge on Strangers so I thought when I could do nothing for myself I would do it for somebody If you should need it well Mother Dear after I had it done I thought you would be thinking you would never see me again so I refrained from telling you so far but today's letter tells me that as a son I owe it to my dear Mother and Father in their hour of trouble to let them know the truth of where I am, I joined the Australian Army in August last and sailed from there on the date of Poor Patrick's death Oh God it seems awful to write such a thing I can't believe it. Oh may God have mercy on him but I know he will Mother I don't know what I will do when I get time to think of it Think of yourself and Poor dear Father I am sure Elizabeth is Broken hearted she thought so much of him and why should she not he was an Ideal brother I don't know what to say I will wait until I see you and that might be very soon that is if you wish it

I will get eight days leave before I go to France which will not be for three months and if you would like to see me Please let me know. It is terrible to think of Poor Patrick and me that is good for nobody let live I wish to God I had to be taken instead of him and Dear mother you need not worry about me I am in the best of health thanks to your trust in God and your prayers and masses I knew it write along mother I knew you were so good and now to think you are in such trouble makes me to what (shed tears) I can't go ahead write any more I will write to E when I get my nerves but don't worry for me my health is the best I've been past about 20 Doctors since I joined the army and none of them eyes found a thing the matter with me

Good Bye and God comfort you Father and all family

From Your loving son
Eddie

Pte E. Brennan 7129
17th Batt
Fovant Camp Salisbury England

Fovant

March 7, 1918

My dear mother

Your letter received and I was very sorry to hear of the death of my old chum poor Pat lalor. What you say is true his case is worse than ours especially for his wife. I am sure she must be distracted and his poor Mother to tis certainly too bad I hope God will be merciful to him.

I had a letter from K Wingfield, she is getting a very smart child and what do you think the last thing she said in it was not to forget Grandma before I go to France.

Elizabeth to me in her letter that she thinks I am so wonderful to be over there fighting those dirty Germans. She never forgot me everytime the girls go she talks about me Well Mother the day is drawing near when I see you, except if something unexpected happens I will leave here on the 9 O'clock train on Thursday 7 March morning but I don't think I will be able to get home before Friday night I will take the boat at holyhead and get off at Dublin I will write or Telegram when I get further particularly which ever I think would be best. You need not worry if you do not hear in time to meet me as I will get home alright with the help of God

No more at present from

Your loving Son

Eddie

P.S.

I fixed up the allotment you will receive your Allotment on March the Thirtieth 28 days at 3 shillings per day that will be 4. 4. 0

E. Brennan AIF
Fovant Camp
Salisbury England

My Dear Brother

Your kind letter to hand also Fathers and Mothers and the one mother sent in care of Mrs Byrne but I did not get the two first letters you sent me I went to the Fovage P.O. and they never arrived there I suppose they are gone to some Battalion of the same number in the British Army and if they did well that is the last of them, I am put on Isolation so I wont get leave for at least two weeks but when I do get it I will go home. If I had not heard from home I was intended going to Dublin and writing from there when I got leave but I am glad that things are squared up as I would like to see you all before I go to France I had arranged with a young chap here to come to Ireland with me and I would lie to take him with me so I want you to write and let me know If you think ye could arrange to put him up he is a young chap right in from the Bush in Australia and wont be very hard to please

We have been chums since I joined up in Australia and you need one in the Army for there is plenty of thieves in it and if you had not someone to watch your stuff when your back is turned you would always paying for shortages I would send a few pound home If I had it but I haven't at present we get 6 shillings a day and all the money I received in four months is about six Pound I have 18 Pound to my credit and cant get a cent of it I tried every means I could but it was no good I went to the pay officer the other day and told him I wanted to make out and allotment of 3 shillings a day to my Mother and he told me I would have to get a note from my Mother that she is partially depending on me fro support so I want you to write a note for her to that effect sent to me saying that she is in poor circumstances at present and that she wants me to allot her what I can afford It is better do this as I cant draw it and the will I made to Father is in the hands of the Military authorities and if they lose the bloody war you cant tell how things will go. I wish it was over now I am sick of this place the food is not fit for pits and what harm if we got enough of it but its no use complaining the poor devils in civil life is worse they told us some awful stories when we were in London some people don't get meat once a week, how is it in Ireland fro food at present I hope nothing like England I believe they are going to cut out the dry canteens now so we wont be able to buy a meal when we have the price I could never believe that things were that bad if I did not see it but I suppose yo are sick reading this so I will say no more about it don't forget to write that note for mother as soon as possible

Good Bye and best love to al write soon and give all news from your loving brother Eddie

P.S.

I am still in the same place how does he like it
Eddie

WAR CHEST FUND, SYDNEY, N.S.W.

France

May 7, 1918

My Dear Brother

Your letter to hand sometime ago glad to see by it that you are alright and trusting that this will find you the same as it leaves me at present in the best of health

I had a letter from Kathleen to day She wrote it since she got the veil and seems to be very happy I received mother's letter today also, I have not received Fathers letter yet

I thing according to some papers I read here lately that Ireland is going to be conscripted I am wondering if you will be excluded on account of being at the mines.

If you have to go try and get in the engineers your experience at the pit ought to enable you to do that easy,

You can tell A. Coogan that I was sorry for having disappointed him that day as when I was talking to him I expected to come back via Carlow.

When you see M. Lyons find out if he got my letter O.K.

I wrote letters to Mother and jim a few days ago I sent Martee and Mary some cards I sent one to M. Mealy also and one to Uncle Pad. When you are writing let kmw know if they got them.

No more at present so Good

Bye and best wishes to all home also all friends and neighbours from

Pte

E.Brennan Brother,
 Eddie

PS

When writing address the letter to D Coy as there is another Brennan in our Battalion

Eddie

Address

Pte E Brennan 7129

D Coy 17th Battalion

2nd Dion

A.I.F.

Extract from Katherine Wingfield's letter 2001

About Uncle Eddie he was my god-father and I was Eddie McIntyres god-mother Edward Joseph O' Brennan McKewon was the fourth child and first son born to Catherine and Martin Brennan McKewon. There was great rejoicing for the heir was here. Strange as it may seem to us. Were Grandfather to die, Grandmother and her three little girls would have to return to her fathers home (no equal rights for women). Now, with the heir, that would not have to take place.

During World War I Eddie was employed on a ship that was torpedoed on Christmas Eve and was all night in a life boat on the ocean. He was one of the five members of the crew that was saved. When America entered the War he happened to be in Australia. He tried to enlist in the American forces but could not there, so he considered the Australian next best and enlisted. He is really entering a British Uniform- Australia was then part of the British Empire. Yes he wrote to me from England (I was a little girl about 9 years old) and I wrote back, Mother helping me. I was fond of Uncle Eddie. The British government paid a pension to our grandparents, his father and mother.

Oliver was with him when he visited out grandparents on a furlough . He was much younger than Uncle Eddie, only 19. Eddie must have been about 30

They had been fighting all night and Eddie told Oliver he didn't feel good. Later Oliver saw him carried into the hospital tent and about 2 hours later carried out (he had died).

What was in his pockets was sent to his parents.

When the news came to us we were at breakfast. I went crying to school and the teachers said the Rosary with our class