

**Theodore E Murphy
War Mobilization Diary
1941–1942**

Andrew Murphy

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THEODORE E MURPHY WAR MOBILIZATION DIARY 1941–1942

transcribed and edited by Andrew Murphy

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Editor's Notes

Theodore Emmett (“Theo”) Murphy’s “Five Year Diary” book is a gilt edged leather bound hardcover book measuring about 4½ inches wide by 6 inches tall by 1¼ inches deep, with a strap and clasp device to keep it closed. Its title page has the notation, “Artamount, Inc. N. Y. C.” ¹

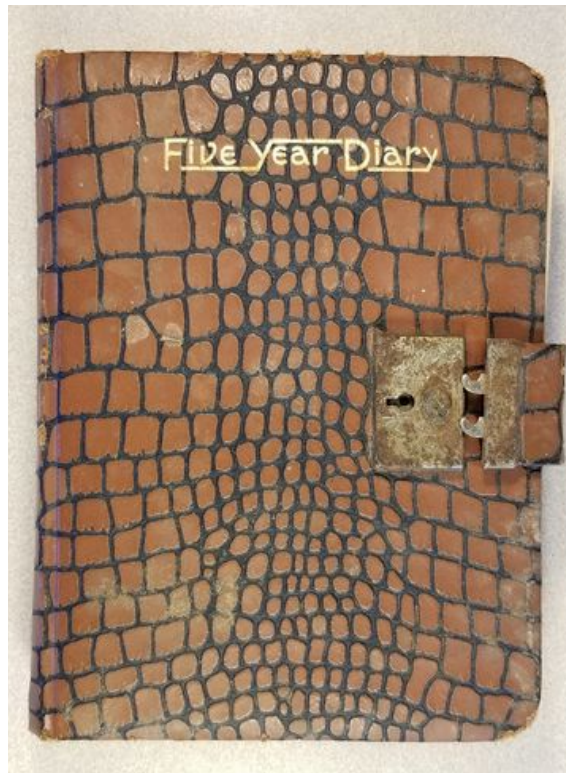


Figure 1: Front cover of Theo Murphy's diary.

Each calendar page of the diary has the month and day at the top, then five sections each beginning with a stamped “19” for the year. The design intends for you to finish the year notation and then write your entry in a section, then go to the next calendar page for the next day’s entry. The set of calendar pages begins with “January 1” and ends with “December 31”. After the last day of each month appear one or more pages with “MEMO” at the top instead of a date. Theo Murphy used the calendar page top section for 1941 entries and the second section for 1942 entries.

Theo did not write his own name in the diary itself. However, he did insert an index card that had the typed line, “SHIP #6 MURPHY, T.E., CAPT. ROOM B-114L”, along with handwritten notes about

¹ The Internet Archive has references to Artamount, Inc., 225 Fifth Ave., New York in 1950s office appliance buyer indexes. The [June 1958 “Office Products Dealer” book on page 26](#) gives the description, “Artamount, Inc., makers of fine stationery leather goods and importers of unusual gift items.”

the *S.S. Fuller*, a naval auxiliary ship. (See the diary entry at 1942 February 18.) He also wrote his wife's name and children's names at various places in the diary.

Generally, Theo wrote his 1941 entries in cursive style, and his 1942 entries in printed style until the June 7 page when he switched back to cursive style. He started an entry by finishing the year with "41" or "42" and then writing the day of the week before writing his narrative; however, later on, he frequently skipped either the year numerals or day of week or both. He consistently wrote his 1941 entries in the top section and his 1942 entries in the second section throughout the book.

Theo wrote some entries longer than could fit in a single calendar page's section, so he would continue on to the next page. This means that not all entries were written on that calendar date. This became explicit on the June 29 calendar page, where Theo wrote in 1942, "This day is 20 November — nearly five months since my last entry." (The June 28 calendar page did have an entry for 1942, which ironically said, "And now I'm all caught up again & hope I stay that way".)

Theo's writing style typically used dashes between sentences or thoughts or list items; and sometimes would have no punctuation at all if a sentence ended at the end of a line. In transcribing the narrative entries, I preserved Theo's original wording, spelling, capitalization, abbreviation, and punctuation. However, I wrote the diary's calendar dates in a consistent format to reduce ambiguity.

~ Andrew Murphy, February 2022.

Background

As Chief of Staff of the United States Army, George C. Marshall submitted a series of reports to the Secretary of War during the period from 1939 through 1945.² Here are excerpts relevant to this diary.

The President's emergency proclamation of 8 September 1939 "permitted the reorganization of our pathetically incomplete square divisions into five new type triangular divisions³ ..." (*Biennial Reports*, page 4)

"Authorization for the National Guard to be called into Federal service was finally given on August 27, 1940, but the \$128,000,000 necessary for initial construction was not appropriated until September 9. The first Guard units were inducted on September 16, the same day that the Selective Service Act was signed by the President." (page 8)

"During the spring of 1941, the program of expansion continued. ... Steps were taken toward the occupation of the new bases in the Atlantic leased from the British Government." (page 13)

"The port of embarkation facilities in New York, Charleston, New Orleans, San Francisco, and Seattle have been expanded tremendously throughout the emergency incident to the movements of troops and supplies to overseas garrisons ..." (page 13)

"Ours must be an all-purpose Army as we are in an entirely different position from a European nation which knows its traditional or potential enemies and the terrain over which it will have to fight. We must be prepared to operate in the Arctic or in the Tropics, in deserts or mountains, and the elements of our ground forces must be properly balanced to meet any contingencies. Our organization must be a balanced one with armored, air, and foot elements in proper proportion to provide the maximum flexibility. After 3 years of careful study and tests an organization for a triangular infantry division was approved and placed in effect in the Regular Army during the fiscal year 1940. The square division,

2 *Biennial Reports of the Chief of Staff of the United States Army to the Secretary of War, 1 July 1939-30 June 1945*, George C. Marshall, special publications, U.S. Army Center of Military History publication 70-57, 1996, 2000, United States Government Printing Office stock number 999-000-44447-6, ISBN 9780160869471. See image version at [<https://history.army.mil/html/books/070/70-57/index.html>], transcription version at [<https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/COS-Biennial/index.html>].

3 Discussions of army square and triangular divisions appear at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Square_division], [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Triangular_division], and [<https://warfarehistorynetwork.com/2016/10/21/u-s-divisions-of-world-war-ii/>]. Briefly, a square division consisted of four regimental sized combat maneuver units; and a triangular division consisted of three such units. (Division support and non-maneuver units were present but not counted in this scheme.) The square configuration was designed to advance the combat maneuver units in waves, side by side ("in line") or with half forward and half immediately behind ("echeloned"). Lead units would take the brunt of impact. The triangular configuration changed this by moving or positioning two combat maneuver units forward and holding the third behind in reserve — "two up, one back" and "defense in depth".

adopted during the {first} World War and modified several times since, has been retained in the National Guard.” (page 21)

“Chart 9: Induction of National Guard into Federal Service” appears on *Biennial Reports* page 28. The chart shows that the 34th Division inducted on 10 February 1941 at [Camp Claiborne](#), Louisiana.

“The National Guard has made more substantial gains in training, personnel, and equipment during the fiscal years 1940 and 1941 than during any similar peacetime period in its history. Upon induction it provided 20,006 officers, 216 warrant officers, and 282,805 enlisted men.” (page 27)

“During the fiscal year 1940, the general court-martial rate per thousand enlisted men fell from 11 to 9; the special court-martial rate, from 23 to 21; and the summary court-martial rate, from 56 to 48.” (page 31)

“Within the borders of a military reservation, the commander is held accountable for the state of morale. The Morale Branch exists to coordinate, stimulate, and influence morale activities and to act as consultants and advisers on morale. ... The primary source of entertainment has been, and will continue to be, motion-picture programs. ... Amateur theatricals have been encouraged and have proved highly successful.” (pages 31-32)

“Upon our entry into the war it became urgently desirable to move United States troops into the United Kingdom as early as possible to bolster the defenses there which had been seriously weakened by the dispatch of troops to the Middle and the Far East, and for the psychological effect on the British people. At that moment, however, the threat to Australia was so serious that most of the shipping immediately available in the Atlantic in January {1942} had to be hurriedly employed for the movement of 25,000 troops to the southwest Pacific, largely to garrison New Caledonia. It therefore was not possible to send more than a single division⁴ to Ireland until the following summer. ... In the latter part of January 1942, the first convoy of our troops arrived in Northern Ireland. The complicated transportation, construction, and administrative problems were solved with the close cooperation of all the British agencies concerned. By June the gathering strength of United States force in the United Kingdom made it necessary to establish a headquarters and organization for a European theater of operations, and Maj. Gen. (now Gen.) Dwight D. Eisenhower was placed in command.” (page 52)⁵

4 That single division was the 34th Division, which first contingent arrived at Belfast on 26 January 1942. See “34th Infantry Division (United States): World War II combat chronicle” at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/34th_Infantry_Division_%28United_States%29#Combat_chronicle].

5 See also the *United States in World War II: United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Chronology* at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/IRECHR.htm>], and *European Theater of Operations, United States Army* at [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/European_Theater_of_Operations,_United_States_Army].

“In January 1942, when the {British} Prime Minister and his chiefs of staff were in Washington, operations in northwest Africa, in Morocco and Algiers, were discussed in detail. ... The adopted plans provided that task forces from both the United Kingdom and the United States should strike simultaneously at Algiers, Oran, and Casablanca. ... it was necessary to delay until November {1942} in order to receive a large number of craft from the shipyards and provide and train the crews for the operation of these vessels. Some of the larger vessels did not become available until a week before the convoys sailed. ... General Eisenhower, who was designated to command the Allied forces involved, organized combined staff in London and directed the planning. Three task forces were formed: one entirely American sailed directly from the United States and carried out the landings along the west coast of Morocco, another of American troops escorted by the British Navy sailed from Great Britain and landed in the vicinity of Oran, the third, a combined British-American ground force escorted by the British Navy, sailed from the British Isles and landed at Algiers. ... The latter force {the Eastern Task Force which had the mission of capturing Algiers} under Lt. Gen. K.A.N. Anderson of the British Army, consisted of British commando and infantry units together with two United States regimental combat teams, one from the 9th and one from the 34th Infantry Divisions, and a Ranger battalion.” (pages 53-56)

Prologue

James Raymond (“Ray”) Murphy (1887–1970), William Murphy’s much younger brother, was probably an inspiring uncle to Theodore Murphy. Ray became a lawyer after college and began practicing in 1912, but he had earlier joined the Iowa National Guard at age 16. He mobilized with his outfit to the Mexican border in 1916,⁶ and returned home a first lieutenant in March 1917. Ray mobilized again in 1917 with the 34th Division, this time for France and World War I.⁷ At some point, he served in the 133rd Infantry Regiment of the 34th Division.

After the war, Ray joined the new [American Legion](#) veteran organization, becoming a post charter member and commander in Ida Grove, a department commander in Iowa in 1925–1926, and the Legion’s national commander in 1935–1936.⁸ Ray served professionally as an Iowa insurance commissioner and assistant attorney general, among other positions. He lived in New York from 1938 to 1958, where he became general counsel for the Association of Casualty and Surety Executives. It was there that uncle and nephew would meet again.^{9 10}

6 After Pancho Villa attacked the town of Columbus, New Mexico in March 1916, General John J. Pershing led a regular Army expedition into Mexico. This thinned the Army’s border guard positions, resulting in further Mexican raids into Texas. In response, President Wilson activated the National Guard in June for border service. The Guard served there until February 1917. See [https://www.army.mil/article/162413/on_the_border_the_national_guard_mobilizes_for_war_in_1916] and [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican_Border_War_\(1910-1919\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mexican_Border_War_(1910-1919))].

7 See [https://www.army.mil/article/191849/the_defining_role_of_the_national_guard_in_wwi].

8 As the American Legion national commander, Ray Murphy witnessed the [Adjusted Compensation Payment Act](#) (part of the “Bonus Act” or “Bonus Bill”) becoming federal law. See a photograph, “Bonus Bill Becomes Law”, in *The Daily Times* newspaper, Davenport, Iowa, Tuesday 28 January 1936 issue, page 4, columns 4 and 5. [Image at Newspapers.com](#).

9 “Ex-Legion Commander dies at 83”, Ray Murphy obituary, *The Sioux City Journal* newspaper, Sioux City, Iowa, Thursday 15 October 1970 issue, page 20, column 5. [Image at Newspapers.com](#).

10 “Ray Murphy Is Dead in California”, obituary, *Des Moines Tribune* newspaper, Des Moines, Iowa, Wednesday 14 October 1970 issue, page 3, column 1. [Image at Newspapers.com](#).

Introduction

Theodore Emmett Murphy (nicknamed “Theo”) was born in January 1903 to William and Barbara Murphy at [Ida Grove](#), Ida County, Iowa, in the United States of America.¹¹ He was one of five children. Theo’s brother, Francis Andreas Murphy, was born in 1908.¹² Theo married MaeBelle (Bugge) in December 1930, and by the time of this diary they had three boys: James, Thomas, and John Robert.

Theo served in the Iowa National Guard, starting as a private on 22 March 1926 and advancing through sergeant and technical sergeant. He was a second lieutenant in the National Guard of the United States (NGUS) Medical Administrative Corps¹³ (MAC) from 13 April 1935 to 24 April 1939; a NGUS MAC first lieutenant from 25 February 1939; and a NGUS MAC captain from 1 May 1940 or 3 August 1940. He federalized on 10 February 1941 as a Medical Administrative Corps captain.^{14 15}

In 1939, Theo’s unit was Company D, 2d Battalion, 136th Medical Regiment, 34th Division (Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota), Seventh Corps area (headquarters at Omaha, Nebraska), Fourth Army, National Guard of the United States.^{16 17}

Typically, American World War I operations had an ambulance company supporting an infantry battalion aid station, which itself was normally 250 to 500 yards behind the front line. “Each division had a sanitary train (today’s medical battalion), which consisted of an ambulance section, a field hospital section, and a medical supply unit.” The ambulance section had four ambulance companies,

11 See a profile of Theodore Murphy in WikiTree at [<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Murphy-24279>]. Pronounce “Theo” exactly as the first two syllables of his given name.

12 Theo and Francis appear in a group photo at [<http://iagenweb.org/ida/military/ww2index.htm>]. Francis and Theo served in the same unit. See a profile of Francis Murphy at [<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Murphy-24530>].

13 The Medical Administrative Corps came into being through the National Defense Act of 1920, and would be absorbed into the newly created Medical Service Corps through the National Security Act of 1947. See *The History of the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps*, by Richard V.N. Ginn, published by the Office of the Surgeon General and Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington, D.C., 1997, CMH Pub 30-19-1, ISBN 0160453534, ISBN-13 9780160453533. Available online at [<https://archive.org/details/TheHistoryOfTheUsArmyMedicalServiceCorps>].

14 Murphy, Theodore E, 1 Lt, Co D (Ida Grove), 136 MED REGT, Iowa, page 459, *Official National Guard Register 1939*, published by authority of the Secretary of War, War Department, National Guard Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1 November 1939, U.S., *Select Military Registers, 1862-1985* [database on-line], Ancestry.com, Provo, Utah, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2013, citing *United States Military Registers, 1902–1985*, Salem, Oregon: Oregon State Library. [Record at Ancestry.com](#). [Image at Ancestry.com](#) (image 465 of 1500).

15 Murphy, Theodore E (Iowa), National Guard (Active), page 851, *Official National Guard Register 1943*, published by authority of the Secretary of War, War Department, National Guard Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1 March 1943, U.S., *Select Military Registers, 1862-1985* [database on-line], Ancestry.com, Provo, Utah, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2013, citing *United States Military Registers, 1902–1985*. Salem, Oregon: Oregon State Library. [Record at Ancestry.com](#). [Image at Ancestry.com](#) (image 857 of 1476).

16 Stations of organizations, Fourth Army, 34th Division, 136th Medical Regiment, page 50, *Official National Guard Register 1939*, published by authority of the Secretary of War, War Department, National Guard Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1 November 1939. [Image at Ancestry.com](#) (image 56 of 1500).

17 136 MED REGT [Iowa] badge description, page 118, *Official National Guard Register 1939*, published by authority of the Secretary of War, War Department, National Guard Bureau, Washington, D. C., 1 November 1939. [Image at Ancestry.com](#) (image 124 of 1500).

each of which had 12 ambulances. The field hospital section operated 4 field hospitals set up 6 to 8 miles from the front.¹⁸

Nine years later, the *Official National Guard Register for 1927*¹⁹ listed the current 136th Medical Regiment organization and stations in Iowa as follows.²⁰

- Regimental Headquarters (no station listed)
- Service Company (no station listed)
- Collecting Battalion Headquarters (no station listed)
 - 186th Collecting Company (no station listed)
 - 187th Collecting Company (no station listed)
 - 188th Collecting Company (no station listed)
- Ambulance Battalion Headquarters (no station listed)
 - 186th Ambulance Company (MD) in Ida Grove, federally recognized 1 April 1926.
 - 187th Ambulance Company (MD) (no station listed)
 - 188th Ambulance Company (AD) (no station listed)
- Hospital Battalion Headquarters (no station listed)
 - 186th Hospital Company in Iowa City, redesignated 30 March 1926 from the 186th Ambulance Company, which had been federally recognized 17 July 1922.
 - 187th Hospital Company (no station listed)
 - 188th Hospital Company (no station listed)
- 136th Veterinary Company (no station listed)

Twelve years later, the *Official National Guard Register for 1939* listed the current 136th Medical Regiment organization and stations in Iowa as follows.²¹

- Regimental Headquarters in Ames, federally recognized 1 August 1936
- Service Company (less the Band Section) in Burlington, federally recognized 1 April 1939
- 1st Battalion Headquarters (no station listed)
 - Company A in Newton, redesignated 1 January 1937 from the 186th Collecting Company, which had been federally recognized 30 July 1936.
 - Company B (no station listed)
 - Company C (no station listed)
- 2d Battalion Headquarters (no station listed)
 - Company D in Ida Grove, redesignated 1 January 1937 from the 186th Ambulance Company, which had been federally recognized 1 April 1926. (See Company G.)
 - Company E in Sibley, redesignated 1 January 1937 from the 187th Ambulance Company, which had been federally recognized 26 June 1936.
 - Company F (no station listed)
- 3d Battalion Headquarters (no station listed)

18 *The History of the U.S. Army Medical Service Corps*, pages 42–44.

19 *Official National Guard Register for 1927*, published by authority of the Secretary of War, Militia Bureau, Washington, D. C., 30 June 1927. Available online at [<https://archive.org/details/officialnational1927unit>].

20 *Official National Guard Register for 1927*, pages 17–18, pages 298–299.

21 *Official National Guard Register for 1939*, page 50, pages 458–459.

- Company G in Iowa City, redesignated 1 January 1937 from the 186th Hospital Company, which had been redesignated 30 March 1926 from the 186th Ambulance Company, which had been federally recognized 17 July 1922.
- Company H (no station listed)
- Company I (no station listed)
- Veterinary Company (no station listed)

Theo's diary begins, then, with Captain Theodore E. Murphy of Company D, 136th Medical Regiment of the 34th Division, Iowa National Guard, residing in Ida Grove on the day his unit became federalized.²²



Figure 2: Theo Murphy in the United States.

22 For “Theo Murphy in the United States” base map credit, see [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Usa_edcp_relief_location_map.png]. For “Theo Murphy in Northern Ireland” base map credit, see [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Northern_Ireland_relief.svg].



Figure 3: Theo Murphy in Northern Ireland

Theo's Diary

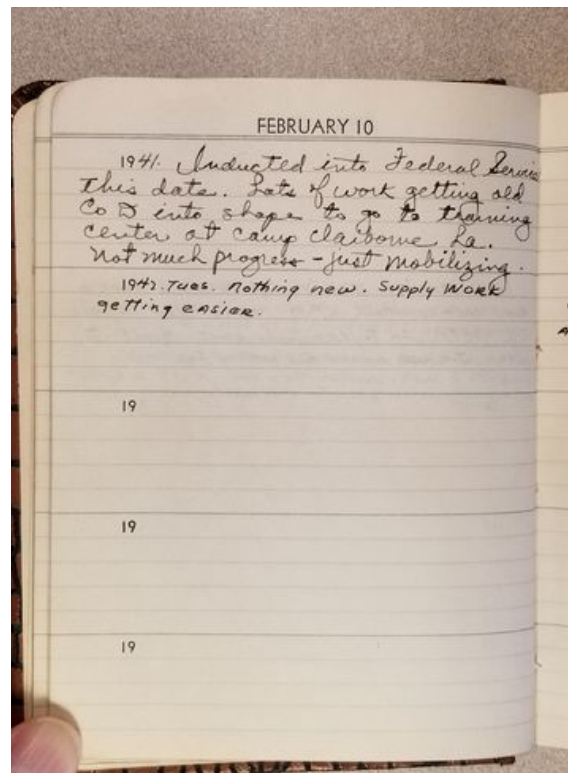


Figure 4: February 10 calendar page, with entries for 1941 and 1942.

1941 February 10. Inducted into Federal Service this date. Lots of work getting old Co D into shape to go to training center at [Camp Claiborne](#) La. Not much progress — just mobilizing.

1941 February 11 Tues. Met at 6:30A. Breakfast at 7 — a march to limber the men up a little. Noon mess, and very good. Started in on physical exams of e. m²³ this afternoon. Drs Gauger —

1941 February 12 Wed. Continued phy exams.²⁴ All men came thru OK, but it took some manipulating. Deters²⁵ sick in bed at Schaller²⁶.

23 "e. m" means enlisted men.

24 physical exams. Doctor Gauger is not known.

25 Donald Cummins Deters (1908–1990), who was a medical doctor with a home and practice in Schaller, and a captain in Company D, 136th Medical Regiment, Iowa National Guard. See [<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Deters-201>]. Also see page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

26 [Schaller](#), Sac County, Iowa, is about 13 miles northeast of Ida Grove.

1941 February 13 Thurs. Started a training program today — using Sgt Armstrong — Murphy — Wittmaack²⁷ Wallace doing much of the work.²⁸

1941 February 14 Fri. Buying provisions for our 52 men is quite a job — all from local people. So much red tape and accountability to a finance officer is very exact. Owens & Bush²⁹ visited us.

1941 February 15 Sat. Half day today — army style. Has been cold & windy. Deters came down today — still not well.

1941 February 16 Sun. To Mass at 8 AM — then the Company to church to Rev. White, good turnout. At nite I talked to the Lutheran Mens Club — quite a day.

1941 February 17 Monday. Beginning the second week — and we have a definite program worked out. Regular hourly classes, etc. Quite a few visitors to the armory, a few staying for meals.

1941 February 18 Tues. Drove to Cedar Rapids yesterday, & return. The men are enjoying the training, and looking forward to leaving for Louisiana. I and eight men, & Lt Corcoran³⁰ & 8 men from E³¹ leave today for Burlington³² to join convoy.

1941 February 19 Wed. Left Burlington early this AM. 27 vehicles & 58 men. I'm acting as advance convoy officer — contacts ahead for meals, lodging & gasoline & oil. 270 mi today — stopping at Farmington, Mo³³. Very cold.

1941 February 20 Thurs. Continued south today. Drove thru heavy snow in northern Ark. Arrived in Searcy Ark³⁴ about 4 P.M. and arranged to stay over night. Billeted in the armory with a cowboy revivalist.

27 End of line after this word.

28 First Sergeant Robert B. Armstrong, Jr. (born 1912), Staff Sergeant Francis A. Murphy (born 1907), Sergeant Charles C. Wittmack (born 1911), and Staff Sergeant Joseph Harley Wallace (born 1915), all in Company D, 136th Medical Regiment. See page 241, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/241/mode/1up>]. Francis Murphy was Theo's younger brother. Joseph Wallace had a younger brother also in the unit, Private First Class Raymond C. Wallace (born 1918). See a photo of Ida County brothers at [<http://iagenweb.org/ida/military/ww2index.htm>].

29 Colonel Earl B. Bush (born 1884), Commander of the 136th Medical Regiment. See page 228, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/228/mode/1up>]. Also see "One Hundred and Thirty-Sixth Medical Regiment" page of *Historical Annual, National Guard of the State of Iowa 1938*, 239 pages, Army Navy Publishing Company, Baton Rouge. See [http://iagenweb.org/wwii/ING/136th_MedicalRegiment.html] and [<http://iagenweb.org/wwii/ING/1938index.html>].

30 First Lieutenant Thomas E. Corcoran (born 1914), Company E, 136th Medical Regiment. See page 230, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/230/mode/1up>].

31 Company E, 136th Medical Regiment at Sibley, Osceola County, northwest corner of Iowa.

32 Burlington, county seat of Des Moines County in southeast corner of Iowa, and on the bank of the Mississippi River. Burlington was also the home of Headquarters and Service Company, 136th Medical Regiment.

33 Farmington, St. Francois County, Missouri, is about 200 miles south of Burlington.

34 Searcy, White County, in central Arkansas, is about 190 miles south-southwest of Farmington.

1941 February 21 Fri. On thru Arkansas into Louisiana. Stayed in Ruston³⁵, La. overnite. A beautiful city of 5000 & very friendly people. Getting warmer as we go farther S. Tulips & roses blooming.

1941 February 22 Sat. Left the convoy early this A.M. and drove on to Alex³⁶ & stopped in Lecompte³⁷ Rented an apt. and then on to New Orleans³⁸ to spend the week end with Bob Glass & wife.

1941 February 23 Sunday. Drove around N.O. today, and the city looks beautiful. [Mardi Gras](#), the azelia tract camillas³⁹ & [royal palms](#) — out to the airport & lake front. Good bye to Bob & Amelia & drove back to Lecompte. Reported to camp.⁴⁰

1941 February 24 Mon. Mud — and more mud everywhere. Sure is sloppy. Camp looks desolate but there is lots of activity, building, cleaning, etc. Nothing much to do.

1941 February 25 Tues. Drove in to Alexandria this A.M. to board the troop train & ride out to camp. Guide the regt⁴¹ to their area, etc. This really a big camp — and a long walk getting back.

1941 February 26 Wed. Co. D moved into their area, and are now getting settled. The boys are full of pep, and want to get something done. Still lots of mud, and is still raining.

1941 February 27 Thurs. Have passed this day by so cannot remember just what has happened. Getting more settled every day. Getting quite well adjusted in Lecompte also.

1941 February 28. Weather has been bad. Much rain & mud. A slippery road & soft shoulder catapulted me & the car into a deep ditch. Quite a wreck, and I will be without transportation⁴²

1941 February 29.⁴³ for several days. Luckily I received nothing more than a few bruises. \$100.00 gone for repairs. Went to church Sunday. Father Besselaar, an elderly Hollander, is the priest.

1941 March 1. Starting in a training program again — very much like the one I used in Ida Grove. Lots of hard work. Have to instruct about five hours each day — and several hours

1941 March 2. — every nite in preparation. Never get to bed before midnight. And up at 5:30 each morning. I'm really getting a workout. And Deters also.

35 [Ruston](#), Lincoln Parish, in north central Louisiana, is about 195 miles south-southwest of Searcy.

36 [Alexandria](#), Rapides Parish, in central Louisiana, is about 85 miles south of Ruston.

37 End of line after this word. [Lecompte](#), Rapides Parish, Louisiana, is about 15 miles south of Alexandria.

38 [New Orleans](#), Louisiana, is about 155 miles southeast of Lecompte.

39 Most likely meant "[azalea](#)" and "[camellias](#)".

40 This was the Camp Claiborne mentioned in the 10 February 1941 entry. [Camp Claiborne](#), Rapides Parish, in central Louisiana, had its main gate 7 miles west of Lecompte. A railroad line ran from Alexandria through Forest Hill, a town just outside the camp's main gate.

41 regiment. Here, this would be Theo's outfit, the 136th Medical Regiment.

42 End of line after this word.

43 There was no 29 February 1941. Theo simply used this calendar page to continue an entry.

1941 March 3. Major Petersen⁴⁴ & Capt. Baker⁴⁵ are our Bn. officers, so are going to help us by instructing a few hours each day.

1941 March 4. Maebelle and boys⁴⁶ getting along well in Lecompte. Have a house, five rooms and bath, and quite comfortable. Boys going to school — and getting acquainted.

1914 March 5. The family, Deters and I drove to Natchez, Miss⁴⁷. Sunday. Really a fine drive — and the city is very old and historic. Saw many fine old homes.

1941 March 6. Training is getting to be a grind. Have 22 subjects to instruct on, some easy, others hard and take much preparation.

1941 March 7. Days are stringing out to be very much the same. Weather is getting somewhat settled, and the sun shines more every week.

1941 March 8. I'm getting over to see my family more as time goes along. Stay several nites each week now. Drive around some evenings to see the country.

1941 March 9. Louisiana is a new experience to me. The countryside is so different from home. Cotton is coming up. Potatoes also, and sugar cane. This particular area is very fertile.

1941 March 10. So many thousand acres are stump land — mighty forests completely destroyed — and now the land is practically all waste — and badly eroded.

1941 March 11. Boyce to Bunkie⁴⁸ on the west bank of the Red River is a deep, rich, red loam, and in a good year produces wonderful crops. Nice to drive around & see people and get away from camp & training.

1941 March 12. We are outside frequently now on marches — getting hardened, into shape. Training is progressing — we are learning, but it is a tremendous task.

1941 March 13. Drove down to Lake Charles with the family & Deters on a fine Sunday afternoon, 85 miles away. Was a fine day and a beautiful drive. Lake Charles is a beautiful drive —

1941 March 14. and full of fine big homes. The lake isn't so much. Is the hub of a big oil industry — and on the intracoastal waterways. Lots of building and people seem to be prosperous.

44 Major Vernon W. Petersen (born 1909), Headquarters 2nd Battalion 136th Medical Regiment. See page 228, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/228/mode/1up>].

45 Captain Charles J. Baker (born 1906), Headquarters 2nd Battalion 136th Medical Regiment. See page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

46 Theo's wife and children.

47 Natchez, Adams County, in southern Mississippi, is on the bank of the Mississippi River and about 65 miles northeast of Lecompte.

48 Boyce is about 25 miles northwest of Lecompte, and Bunkie is about 15 miles southeast of Lecompte. Only Boyce is actually on the bank of the Red River itself. Bunkie and Lecompte are somewhat inland.

1941 March 15. We are drawing much equipment now. Have some new ambulances⁴⁹ — foot lockers for the men, dishes for the mess halls, etc.

1941 March 16. Quite a few officers families coming in now. Thayers⁵⁰ & Deters live next to us. Howars⁵¹ are moving to Lecompte. Minkels⁵² at Forest Hills; Geise⁵³ to be married soon & moving to Lecompte.

1941 March 17. The people of Lecompte are very friendly — but know how to charge. Clarks — Rougeow — Roby — Odonis — Mareno — Mrs. Givens and her girls — the Firman's, etc. Just a typical small town, anyplace in the U.S.

1941 March 18. South of Lecompte is Meeker⁵⁴, and there is a large sugar refinery. The manager, Mr. Firman, contracts 5000 acres of sugar cane each year for the output of the mill.

1941 March 19. There are many lumber mills in Louisiana — some near Lecompte. A large one is at Longleaf⁵⁵ — another at Oakdale⁵⁶ and a large pulp mill at Elizabeth⁵⁷. Most of the timber has been cut off.

1941 March 20. However there is much second growth stuff in all directions. The federal government has thousands of acres of tree plantations near our camp. There is a virgin forest near Simpson⁵⁸.

1941 March 21. There are rumors about that I am to be transferred to 2d Bn Hq as Bn. Adj.⁵⁹ Would rather remain with Co. D. Training is getting much easier as we go along from day to day.

49 See “WW2 US Army Ambulances and Medical-Related Vehicles” at [<https://www.med-dept.com/articles/ww2-us-army-ambulances-and-medical-related-vehicles/>].

50 Chaplain, First Lieutenant Edwin B. Thayer (born 1905), Headquarters 136th Medical Regiment. See page 230, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/230/mode/1up>].

51 First Lieutenant Bruce F. Howar (born 1912), Company B 136th Medical Regiment. See page 230, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/230/mode/1up>].

52 Captain Roger M. Minkel (born 1907), Company A 136th Medical Regiment. See page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

53 Captain Gerald E. Geise (born 1912), Headquarters 1st Battalion 136th Medical Regiment. See page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

54 Meeker was about 3 miles southeast of Lecompte, and along the Bayou Boeuf.

55 Longleaf, Rapides Parish, Louisiana is about 10 miles southwest of Lecompte, and south-southwest of Forest Hill.

56 Oakdale, Allen Parish, Louisiana is about 14 miles south-southwest of Longleaf.

57 Elizabeth, Allen Parish, Louisiana is about 8 miles northwest of Oakdale.

58 Simpson, Vernon Parish, Louisiana is about 30 miles northwest of Elizabeth and 38 miles west-northwest of Lecompte.

59 “Bn. Adj.” is “battalion adjutant”. An American army [adjutant](#) assists the unit commander with administrative functions of the unit, especially with personnel matters.

1941 March 22. Col. Owen is attached to G-3 as P&T⁶⁰ for medical units, and is rather severe in his methods. Keeps us on our toes all of the time.

1941 March 23. Weather is becoming better each week — not so much rain, and the mud is gradually vanishing. Co D area is being improved constantly, and they are comfortably situated now.

1941 March 24. Claiborne is a wonderful camp. Facilities are the best. Permanent mess halls and latrines. Elec lights in all buildings & tents. Gas fired ranges & water heaters. Huge

1941 March 25. — ice boxes in every kitchen. Each tent has a natural gas stove for heat, board floors, and they are quite comfortable — much better than the officers tents. The latrines are

1941 March 26. — are well equipped with modern flush stools — urinals — and large wash basins. The shower room is large & well equipped. Some trees in the area for shade.

1941 March 27. Maj Petersen & Capt. Baker are going to M.F.S.S⁶¹ at Carlisle⁶² — and I'm going to Bn Hq for sure, effective April 1st. Will be something new.

1941 March 28. Terrain is drying up rapidly — so we are able to get outside training. Going into the woods for scouting & patrolling. Wood flowers are so dainty & beautiful. Caught a land terrapin.

1941 March 29. Funny little animals with two trap doors, pull in head & feet and are completely protected by bony armour. Ground is getting warm & snakes beginning to crawl about.

1941 March 30. Really are getting a workout in training, and Col. Owen is inspecting & is plenty tough. But believe he is doing a lot of good by keeping us in high gear.

1941 March 31. Lecompte is becoming beautiful. The bayou is full — the trees & Spanish moss — new flowers & flowering shrubs, everything typical of a southern town. And the magnolias — so green — flowers

MEMO. — are so waxy & creamy, and smell like bananas. They get as large as cups, and last several weeks. We are getting better acquainted & more at home all of the time.

1941 April 1. 2d. Bn. Adj⁶³ now, but don't know much about the work. The previous adj. didn't seem to be very busy, especially the 1st Bn. Adj. First thing I'm assigned to a division gas school.

60 "G-3" would be the operations staff, and "P&T" would be "plans and training". The "G" staff letter and the colonel rank imply division or possibly higher echelon. See [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Staff_\(military\)#Continental_Staff_System_\(ContStaff\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Staff_(military)#Continental_Staff_System_(ContStaff))].

61 M.F.S.S is "Medical Field Service School". See "Medical Field Service School" by John Kurash, U.S. Army Military History Institute, on 10 August 2007 at [https://www.army.mil/article/4376/medical_field_service_school]. Also see a contemporary photograph at [<https://www.loc.gov/resource/fsa.8d25697/>].

62 [Carlisle](#), Cumberland County, south central Pennsylvania. The name "Carlisle" in a military context is often shorthand for [Carlisle Barracks](#), a United States Army installation in the town.

63 "2d. Bn. Adj" is "Second Battalion Adjutant", Theo's new duty position. "1st Bn. Adj." is "First Battalion Adjutant".

1941 April 2. The gas school is good. Col. Hinman⁶⁴ is a wonderful instructor, and puts over his subject matter so clearly. Is quite a large group — 75–100 off & e.m.⁶⁵ attending.

1941 April 3. The 2d Bn Hq. group is made up of S. Sgt. Stallman⁶⁶ — Sanders — Laurensen — Busroe⁶⁷ — Chasteen⁶⁸. Looks like Capt. Kuntz⁶⁹ unloaded. The group is poorly organized — and not to much to do.

1941 April 4. I'm helping Deters a couple of hours each day & sometimes four & five. Instructing is good for the instructor, as well as the men. I know the Regt. & function much better than ever.

1941 April 5. Col. Owen is pouring it on. Sat. morning technical inspections for proficiency — and is he hard to get along with. Weather is getting better all of the time. Some hard spring rains, but longer periods of sunshine.

1941 April 6. The mud is gone — the grass is green — trees all leafing out — millions of wild woods flowers — gardens beginning to show — spring is really here. We are driving more each evening.

1941 April 7. The plantations — old homes — live oaks — people, are always a source of pleasure to us. Ask lots of questions — and get many answers. Darkies everywhere — in the fields — along the roads — in their shacks and all over the towns.

1941 April 8. Negroes are an indolent — carefree — haphazard race of people. Children grow up — marry — have lots of babies — work sometimes — always living from day to day — have nothing — and seldom worry.

64 Jack Hinman, Jr. (born 1888), was a lieutenant colonel on 10 February 1941, assigned to Headquarters 34th Division. See page 18, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/18/mode/1up>].

65 “off & e.m.” is “officers and enlisted men”.

66 Likely Virgil J. Stallman (born 1919), who was a corporal on 10 February 1941 in Company E 136th Medical Regiment. See page 244, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/244/mode/1up>].

67 Verlon K. Busroe (born 1919), who was a private on 10 February 1941 in Company D 136th Medical Regiment. See page 242, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/242/mode/1up>].

68 Either James C. Chasteen (born 1916), who was a private on 10 February 1941 in Company D 136th Medical Regiment (see page 242, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/242/mode/1up>]) or William F. Chasteen (born 1921), who was a private on 10 February 1941 in Company D 136th Medical Regiment (see page 243, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/243/mode/1up>]). The two were brothers, according to a group photo at [<http://iagenweb.org/ida/military/ww2index.htm>].

69 Captain George S. Kuntz (born 1913), who had been in Company E 136th Medical Regiment. See page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

1941 April 9. Are constantly kept in their proper sphere in relation to the “whites”. Seldom give any trouble — if they step “out of bounds” they are harshly & quickly put right back. Rather unjust to we northerners, but necessary.

1941 April 10. Negroes love color, & “show”. Dress the brightest, play the hardest, pray the loudest, and sing the sweetest of any people I know — and is a “nigger” funeral something.

1941 April 11. Training is getting easier cause Deters can handle so much more of the work now. The camp is about finished and is really fine. The woods are lovely, and the world in general is good.

1941 April 12. Maebelle bought a lovely “formal.” We are going to the “generals Ball.” Really is a dress up, classy affair, with entertainment & 11 PM dinner.

1941 April 13. The “ball” was lots of fun and everyone looked so nice in their “full dress.” Specially M’Belle. I’m more in love than ever. But all of the ladies looked nice. Something “funny” about T’s, but suppose its o.k.

1941 April 14. We are driving into distant parts of the state more & more. Sunday trips of 150–250 miles are the usual thing, and our map is lined like an old persons palm.

1941 April 15. We are going to receive 500 selectees soon, and Im in charge of the selectee traing⁷⁰ group. Have to have a four day refresher course on methods of training. Am sure it will be lots of work, but interesting.

1941 April 16. My training group is 45 e.m, and I’ll have 15 officers. Maj Petersen is in charge, but he is away to Carlisle — so I’ve the work to do. Starting out good — and the men are eager, and trying hard.

1941 April 17. Have to cover all of the subjects used in the basic training, 22 in all. Procedure is to have the men know the subject matter, then show them how to assist in putting it out to the selectees.

1941 April 18. Actual work of training will be responsibility of 5 officers, one in charge of each 100 men. Two Lts⁷¹ will have a sub group of 50 men each. Each sub group will have 5 non-coms⁷² or pvts⁷³ to assist.

1941 April 19. Kind of hard going back many months & picking up what was done a year ago. One thing I am sure of — selectee training moved along very well — and I’m sure everyone concerned was well-

1941 April 20. pleased with the results we got. Had to be well planned & organized to be able to do very much in the limited time we had at our disposal. I got out a daily work

70 “Im” is “I’m”, and “traing” is “training”.

71 lieutenants.

72 noncommissioned officers, also known as sergeants and corporals.

73 privates.

1941 April 21. -sheet, a program to follow throughout each day. Begins with roll call at 7:30 AM & outlines each subject, giving instructional aids such as charts — blackboard & chalk —

1941 April 22. — actual materials such as individual & organizational to study & handle, instructors assigned to teach each subject, and training areas to use.

1941 April 23. The instructors functioned very well — and the trainees showed fine interest — thus they gained much knowledge in a few days. After 12 days of such intense training the groups were again —

1941 April 24. divided and turned over to the companies to which assigned. This was done in order to carry out tactical training in the field. New equipment in the form of motor vehicles had

1941 April 25. been rolling in all during the month of April — so by this time most of the units had sufficient rolling stock so they could load personnel & equipment and move out into the open

1941 April 26. spaces. Remember one day while training in a wooded valley one of the men came upon a large cotton mouth snake. We quickly killed the thing. It was as thick as my wrist & about five

1941 April 27. feet long. The days are quite warm & sunshiny now — so the reptiles of this swampy wooded country are making their appearance more & more everyday.

1941 April 28. Have been out in the woods a lot, and one Sunday took my family thru several miles of very little traveled woods road to a lake; “Cacodry”.⁷⁴ Kind of a dismal place — but wonderful

1941 April 29. for fishing — and in the seldom traveled, far reaches of the place there are said to be 14–16 foot alligators. We didn’t see any.

1941 April 30. All this time we had been becoming better acquainted with the country & its people, and were quite content. I had already found that the April sun burned harder in

MEMO. the south than in the north — so usually went around with my nose & ears very red and dead skin peeling off. The boys are quite tanned, specially Tom — who runs around like an

MEMO. Indian : John R. is growing rapidly — and doesn’t like negros. He runs at them and hits them with his hands or a stick. Dare say he will be very accustomed to them before we leave.

{ No further entries for 1941. In the fall of 1941 while at Camp Claiborne, the 34th Division participated in a very large wargame field exercise known as the [Louisiana Maneuvers](#), involving about 400,000 troops over 3400 square miles. }

⁷⁴ There is a Cocodrie Lake and Bayou Cocodrie 2 miles north of [Monterey](#), Concordia Parish, Louisiana. Monterey is 40+ miles east-northeast of Alexandria. There is also a large Cocodrie Lake just 7 miles south of Lecompte.

1942 January 1 Thurs. A new year, and begin by working all day — preparing to move to Ft. Dix⁷⁵. Much work w/ reports for 1st Bn. & men transferral to 53d Med. Bn.⁷⁶ & 10th Sta Hosp.⁷⁷ Heart breaking to see a swell regt broken up.

1942 January 2 Friday. Deters — Jersa⁷⁸ — Howar — Yetter⁷⁹ Baker — Corcoran to 53d. What a crime. Work 24 hours a day on supply. Home to Lecompte for a few hours rest.

1942 January 3 Sat. Rainy — mud everywhere. Frenzy of endeavor to equip the regiment completely. Drawing for 1st. Bn; which will move first.

1942 January 4 Sunday. Staying in camp. To Mass, Fr. Kane⁸⁰ of 168th Inf. gave a fine sermon on swearing — using the Lords name. Resting some, but still much work to do. Deters back to Co. D.

1942 January 5 Monday. 53d moved. Loading vehicles of 1st. Bn on flats & box cars. A big job. Sgt. Johnson⁸¹ a big help to Deters. Still drawing for 1st. Bn. & much to come.

1942 January 6 Tuesday. 1st Bn moved today. Drew cots — stoves — clothing, etc & put on baggage car. Now starting all over for rest of regt.

1942 January 7 Wed. Starting to load rest of vehicles — orgn equip⁸² — baggage — etc for balance of regt.⁸³ Drawing much clothing & materiel. Many reports to get in. Sleeting & snowing during night.

1942 January 8 Thurs. Much mud every where. Still working on loading. 1st group of 19 off to move sometime tonite — balance tomorrow. Home to Lecompte for a few hours, and to say good bye to my family.

1942 January 9 Friday. Up all nite getting ready to move. Worked like the devil cleaning up property affairs. Entrained at 11:20 AM. Moved out of Claiborne 12 M.⁸⁴ Talked with M'Belle for 20 minutes. Surely is a brave girl — no tears. I feel sick about leaving the family.

75 [Fort Dix](#), 15 miles southeast of Trenton in central New Jersey, served as a staging area for troops that would move through the [New York Port of Embarkation](#) to points overseas.

76 53d Medical Battalion.

77 10th Station Hospital.

78 Captain Harold O. Jirsa (born 1911), Company H 136th Medical Regiment. See page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

79 End of line after this word. First Lieutenant William L. Yetter (born 1914), Company G 136th Medical Regiment. See page 230, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/230/mode/1up>].

80 First Lieutenant (Chaplain) Stephen W. Kane, Headquarters 168th Infantry Regiment. See page 130, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/130/mode/1up>].

81 The *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941* lists a Staff Sergeant Vierl F. Johnson (born 1917) in Company D 136th Medical Regiment in February 1941, but there are also twins (Private First Class Herbert K. Johnson and Private First Class Hobert K. Johnson, born 1921) in Company D, who may have been promoted since induction. Also, there is a Staff Sergeant Vernon E. Johnson (born 1912) listed in Company E 136th Medical Regiment.

82 “orgn equip” is organizational equipment.

83 136th Medical Regiment.

84 The “A” or “P” is missing from “12 M” in the original document. Previous sentence implies 12 PM, noon.

1942 January 10 Sat. Going thru Miss—Ala—Ga—S.Car N. Carolina.⁸⁵ Detrained at [Atlanta](#) & marched about city for 20 minutes. Lost \$10.00 at poker no luck. Looking at ever changing scenery.

1942 January 11 Sun. Still enroute to Dix. Stopped in [Wash. D.C.](#) at 3 P.M. for 30 min. & marched up to capitol buildings. Brisk weather — snow & windy. Busy city & thousands of girls every where. Arrive at Dix 7.50 P.M. Cold — long march to quarters⁸⁶

1942 January 12 Mon. Busy today rehabilitating quarters kitchens, etc. Busy drawing materials — food, etc. Snow melting & muddy, but quite cold at nite. All plumbing frozen & broken. Terrible mess & cost to gov't. 44th⁸⁷ a lousey outfit.

1942 January 13 Tues. Still working getting settled. Beginning to draw some shortages, but very slow. Snow still on ground & muddy. In to [Trenton](#) with Connell⁸⁸ to see “[How Green My Valley.](#)” Wire fr Mrs Connell — saying safely in Carroll.⁸⁹

1942 January 14 Wed. First contact with Bynell; & not good. Having trouble getting transportation. Pictures for passports. No supply shortages today.

1942 January 15 Thursday. Usual routine. Getting very muddy, but not as bad as Claiborne in Feb & Mar 1941. Supply off. meeting — possibly no move for some time.

1942 January 16 Friday. Letter fr Maebelle — home O.K. but tired out. Poor girl — must have been a hard trip home; but full of spunk. Drew some clothing for the men. Hear trucks are in Morrisville, PA.⁹⁰

1942 January 17 Sat. Innoculation for typhoid & typhus. Off at noon for Trenton & N.YC⁹¹. Pennsy⁹² — and a fine train. 1:02 to make the trip⁹³ Lots to see — Radio City — St Patrick Cathedral — 5th Ave — Broadway — then down on [L.I.](#) to Ray M's⁹⁴ for the nite.

1942 January 18 Sunday. A very nice day with Aunt Edith. Church at 10:30 A. Drive around L.I. Lunch at 1 P.M. Visit with John Halls'. Drive to N.Y.C & La Guardia Airport. Home to 7 PM dinner — visit to 8:30. Train to N.Y.C — Trenton & back to camp by 11 P.M. Truly a fine day.

85 End of line after this word. Mississippi — Alabama — Georgia — South Carolina North Carolina.

86 End of line after this word.

87 [44th Division](#), a National Guard unit serving New Jersey, Delaware, and New York, and posted at Fort Dix in 1941.

88 Captain John R. Connell (born 1910), Headquarters and Service Company 136th Medical Regiment. See page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

89 [Carroll](#), Carroll County, Iowa, roughly midway between Ida Grove and Des Moines.

90 [Morrisville](#), Bucks County, Pennsylvania, across the Delaware River from Trenton, New Jersey.

91 [New York City](#).

92 “Pennsy” is a nickname for the [Pennsylvania Railroad](#).

93 End of line after this word.

94 James Raymond (“Ray”) and Edith Murphy, Theo’s uncle and aunt, lived at [Great Neck](#), just northeast of Queens, Long Island, New York. This is when the uncle and the nephew met again.

1942 January 19 Mon. Yesterday my 1st visit to N.Y.C., a birthday⁹⁵, & 4 letters from Maebelle. Today rather dull. Quite a few amb⁹⁶ — trucks etc in & unloaded & winterized. Lots of work for the men.

1942 January 20 Tues. Called M'Belle last nite. Sure sounded good to me, & said "hello" to Jim — Tom & J.R. Sure do miss them. War is a terrible thing, tearing apart family ties. Am not content, but make a hard situation worse to grumble. Just keep on working — time passes.

1942 January 21 Wed. More work. Shortage reports on clothing & equipment we can't draw. Supply is a muddle — because some men don't know their work, and they are all "higher ups" who are not big enough for their positions.

1942 January 22 Thurs. Lots of vehicles & equipment in now — much material lost (stolen) enroute. Work to do replenishing these items, if we can get them. Train loads of equipment & clothing coming in every day. This is a big camp — and much activity.

1942 January 23 Friday. Getting warehouses & workshops, so may be here for some time. Have to complete preparation to embark in every phase, physical, identification, equipment, repair, everything. And getting many new officers & enlisted men.

1942 January 24 Sat. Some more inoculations this A.M. F.⁹⁷ & I rode in to Trenton with Deters, & then on to New York on the Pennsy. Down to lower Manhattan, thru financial section — Wall St. "The Battery" "Trinity Churchyard", then out into the harbor. Governors Island — Ellis Island — Statue of Liberty — Staten Island, & finally The Skyline ..

1942 January 25 Sunday. Spent the day with Uncle Ray & Aunt Edith. To church — 1 P.M. dinner — then ride thru Manhattan. Saw Polo Grounds — Yankee Stadium — Triboro Bridge — along waterfronts of East River — Hudson River. Met some nice people — forget their names.

1942 January 26 Monday. Rumors that 34th will triangularize are persistent. Hope not. More mail from home today. Wonderful what a letter from the right people can do to lift depressive thoughts. Mrs. Connell is here & most of the other wives.

1942 January 27 Tuesday. Nothing new — same kind of work with the same people. Wonder why so many people live in such a lousy, wasteland state like New Jersey. Just migrated here from the "Old World", ran out of money — so couldn't move farther west. Every class of people here have less — except the wealthy few.

1942 January 28 Wed. There are many cranberry bogs nearby — the Eatmor brand. And Bordentown is famous for its high priced milk — and this camp is a graft & a crime of national scope, a terrific steal of the taxpayers money — and a complete picture of laxity of planning, and honest supervision.

95 Theo's birth date was 18 January 1903. He was now 39 years old.

96 ambulances

97 "F" is Francis Murphy, Theo's younger brother.

1942 January 29 Thurs. Francis said Edna⁹⁸ would be here today. Wish I had called for Maebelle to come; but I was afraid we would be gone by the time they arrived. Persistent rumors of leaving soon. Still drawing material & supplies — but just about complete. Weather is quite good.

1942 January 30 Friday. Talked with Edna, Toots & Mrs. Johnson. Met Gettier's⁹⁹ mother & girl friend. Said my family O.K. Thank God. Still undecided about calling M'Belle. Do want to see her so much.

1942 January 31. 34th triangularized. 136th to 109th Bn.¹⁰⁰ Strength reduced to 482 e.m & 38 off. Much reorganization, & some hard feeling. Worked all day. Called Maebelle to hurry to Dix. Talked with Jim — Tom & J.R.

1942 February 1 Sun. Spent day at Dix — resting up for M'Belle. Sure am thrilled. Men of Hq Det.¹⁰¹ all out of sorts because of reorganization. Sorry, but beyond my control.

1942 February 2 Monday. Today is the day. Wire saying M'Belle & J.R. coming 5:01 PM. Took Deters car to meet them. Room at Hotel Winsdor¹⁰² started to live all over again.

1942 February 3 Tues. Much work — loading trucks finish crating equipmt. Lots of work on reorganization — turning in materiel (trucks & orgn equip.) — changing Co. roster — lining up sections¹⁰³ Price¹⁰⁴ for 1st. sgt.

1942 February 4 Wed. Nothing new. Worked all day while other officers left — pleasure bent. Wanted to spend the afternoon with M'Belle and J.R. To Trenton at night.

1942 February 5 Thurs. Usual day. Working at supply. 82 new men to quarter — cloth & feed. Sure a headache. Took Maebelle & J.R to see Monty Wooloy in "[The Man Who Came To Dinner](#)". Very good.

1942 February 6 Friday.

1942 February 7 Sat. Usual Sat. Insp. quarters. Half day. In to Trenton. Raining hard. Drove to Phila¹⁰⁵ to see Independence Square — Liberty Bell, etc. Nice city — but hard to get into and out of.

98 Francis Murphy's wife, Edna.

99 Private Earl L. Gettier (born 1919), Company E 136th Medical Regiment. See page 246, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/246/mode/1up>].

100 The 136th Medical Regiment became the 109th Medical Battalion, remaining within the 34th Division. A thorough description of the WWII infantry division's medical battalion and its duties appears at [<https://www.med-dept.com/articles/the-ww2-medical-battalion-infantry-division/>].

101 Headquarters Detachment. See [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Headquarters_and_headquarters_company_\(United_States\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Headquarters_and_headquarters_company_(United_States))] and its last paragraph.

102 End of line after this word. (Spelling of "Winsdor" is in the original handwriting.)

103 End of line after this word.

104 Probably the former Staff Sergeant Kenneth W. Price (born 1915) of Headquarters and Service Company 136th Medical Regiment in February 1941. See page 232, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/232/mode/1up>].

105 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, about 27 miles southwest of Trenton.

1942 February 8 Sunday. Up at 7 A.M. Took J.R. over to a Jewish lady for the day. M'Belle — Edna — Francis & I to N.Y. Church at [Elizabeth](#) N.J. Drove along G.W. Bridge — Riverside Drive to Lower Manhattan — along Battery — then over Queensboro Bridge & out on Long Island to Ray M. Nice visit & dinner. Back to 59 & B'way along 5th Ave — Broadway — Times ¹⁰⁶ — Lincoln Tunnel & Tren.

1942 February 9 Monday. Tired — not to much work in A.M. 12 mile march in P.M. More tired. Lecture till 9.30 PM. In to Trenton by 10:15. Right to sleep. J.R. was awake and waiting for me.

1942 February 10 Tues. Nothing new. Supply work getting easier.

1942 February 11 Wed. Half day off. Drove to [Asbury Park](#)¹⁰⁷ up Atlantic coast to [South Amboy](#), back to Trenton. M'Belle J.R. — Francis, Edna. Beautiful drive — first view of Atlantic. Dinner for the bunch, then to hotel.

1942 February 12 Thursday. Same old stuff — work. Sgt. Hall going to MAC School.¹⁰⁸ Sorry to loose him. Ingebritzen¹⁰⁹ to Inf School.¹¹⁰ Haskell to MAC School. Skewes¹¹¹ to MAC School — all good men. In to town at nite. Wouldn't miss (Co. D. party till 10 PM)

1942 February 13 Friday. Another work day. Also went on 8 mile march. Getting caught up on supplies. 5 amb to N.Y.P.E.¹¹² Into Trenton to see M'Belle & JR. Sure am glad they came to see me.

1942 February 14 Saturday. Work in morning — afternoon with Maebelle & J.R. in Trenton. Show, late dinner — then to hotel to read paper & talk over many things. Decided M'belle & J.R. to return to I.G.¹¹³ Monday 5:39 PM. 65 trucks to N.Y.P.E.

1942 February 15 Sunday. Late breakfast with Maebelle & John R — then to high Mass at Trenton Cathedral. J.R. is a scamp, but a lovable one. To show in afternoon — late dinner, & then to hotel. A peaceful day — forgot all activity at camp. 8 trucks to N.Y.P.E.

1942 February 16. Maebelle & John Robert left at 5:39 P for home. Sure tough to see them go — but no tears. Only gladness for two splendid weeks together again. Rained hard on way back to camp. Mud everywhere. This camp is lousey.

106 A small square appears here in the text, implying Times Square.

107 End of line after this word.

108 Medical Administrative Corps School — possibly one of the several Medical Replacement Training Centers then in operation. See [<https://www.med-dept.com/articles/ww2-u-s-medical-replacement-training-centers-mrtc/>].

109 The former Technical Sergeant Melvin B. Ingebritsen (born 1893) of Company B 136th Medical Regiment in February 1941. See page 237, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/237/mode/1up>].

110 The [U.S. Army Infantry School](#) at Fort Benning, Georgia.

111 The former Private First Class Kenneth W. Skewes (born 1917) of Headquarters and Service Company 136th Medical Regiment in February 1941. See page 232, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/232/mode/1up>].

112 [New York Port of Embarkation](#), a United States Army command that moved troops overseas.

113 [Ida Grove](#), Ida County, Iowa — Theo Murphy's family home.

1942 February 17. Hustle all day completing equipment & clothing of men; last minute rush cleaning bldgs — drawing food — turning in trucks & equipment etc. Capt. Jones joined the Bn. Dinner at officers club. No sleep — up all nite preparing to entrain.

1942 February 18. Entrained at 3 AM — moved at 4 AM. Arrived N.Y.P.E. 8:30 A. Boarded ship 9:30 A. Much delay (red tape) checking passenger lists, etc. This seems to be a good boat — 1050 e.m. & 60 off. 4 nurses. Nice bright day — beautiful view of harbor¹¹⁴ Fuller. Don't know when we sail.

{Index card inserted into journal book.}

{Side 1 (first two lines typed, remainder hand written)}:

11

SHIP #6 MURPHY, T.E., CAPT. ROOM B-114L

Roommate - Capt. Minkel (snores like the devil)

Accommodations - 2 berths -/av. 2 chests - writing desk - wardrobe - med. cab. - porthole.

Location: Portside passage way - midship.

{Side 2 (handwritten notes)}:

[S.S. Fuller](#) - naval auxilliary ship. Crew, 400.

Troops: 72 off - 1007 e.m. - 4 nurses.

3 holds for troops #1 #2 #3 divided into 1st platform & 2d deck.

Armament: 1—5" piece; 4—3.50 pieces; 10—.50 mchg.

Officers: Capt Thiess - Commander Flanagan - Lt. Commander Hard - Lt Neal - Lt Pierce.¹¹⁵ Comm.

Brady. (MC)Lt. Smith - O'Connor - Knopf(D)

Other Ships: [Neville](#) - [Geo E. Elliott](#) - [Barnett](#) - [Dutchess of Atholl](#) - [Battleship N.Y](#) - [Cruiser](#)

[Philadelphia](#) - 12 to 15 destroyers -¹¹⁶

Kitchens: Models for efficiency - cleanliness & good food. Feed 1400-1500 men every meal - and do it easily. A good bakery.

{End of inserted index card.}

1942¹¹⁷ February 19 Thursday. Truly a wonderful day. Left P.E.¹¹⁸ 5.55 AM. Down river — into harbor by tugboat. Into Atlantic 6:50. Out of site of land 9.40 AM. Beautiful sight — at least 30 large ships always in sight — 3 Navy blimps & seaplanes overhead. Water not too rough — hundreds of white caps. Assigned to command a compartment. Drills etc. All lights out at 6:30 P.M.

¹¹⁴ End of line after this word.

¹¹⁵ End of line after this word.

¹¹⁶ USS *Fuller* (AP-14), USS *Neville* (APA-9), USS *George F. Elliott* (AP-13), USS *Barnett* (APA-5) were [Heywood-class attack transports](#). RMS *Dutchess of Atholl* was an ocean liner converted to a troop ship. According to the *United States in World War II: United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Chronology* [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/IRECHR.htm>] entry for 2 March 1942, this was a 21 ship convoy plus escorts, with the *Fuller* carrying the 109th Medical Battalion.

¹¹⁷ Original handwriting mis-wrote this as "1943".

¹¹⁸ port of embarkation.

1942 February 20 Friday. What a day. Awoke 6:20 — dress-up to breakfast. Don't feel so good. Ship is pitching fiercely. Outside to heave. In for rest of breakfast. Finish — outside to heave again. 3 times is a charm, no more today. Put in charge of _abandon ship_. Have 22 off. & 752 e.m. I'm last man off. Whew. Squalls — sleet — snow — sunshine all mixed up. Very windy & quite cold. Feel good tonite. Wrote to M'Belle & boys.

1942 February 21 Sat. Today much better. Rough sea, but not sick. Keeping busy, so don't think of the roll of the ship. Abandon ship drill again — much improved. Going north 65 mi outside coast of Main.¹¹⁹ Made port at [Halifax](#) 1 PM. Long indentation into land for a harbor. Out to sea again 3:30 PM. Becoming cold — blizzard & rough. Very rough before midnight. Mail went out at Halifax.

1942 February 22 Sunday. No services — drill in A.M. — watch progress outside in P.M. Most interesting. Sub sighted of starboard bow 3:30 P.M. Changed course of all ships 90° to port. Destroyer went into action & dropped 3 depth charges. Results ?¹²⁰ Yesterday [S.S. American Legion](#) dropped out at Halifax. 5th Gen Hosp — 109 E & others.¹²¹

1942 February 23 Monday. Watched progress fr bridge. Very interesting signal system ([flags - blinker light](#) - whistles)¹²² Abandon ship drill good. Saw several blackfish spouting — a species of whale. Caught one on surface in glass — about 15' long. Interesting little birds, very small, white breast¹²³ dark head & back, small wings. Dive & stay under a minute or longer — called Hell's chickens. About 80 mi off Greenland.

1942 February 24 Tues. Nothing eventful. Phila catapulted 2 seaplanes into air for reconnaissance.¹²⁴ Usual calm sea, cloudy all day. Feeling better — cold loosened up. No drills today. Won \$4. at poker

1942 February 25 Wed. Clear all day. Nothing unusual. Moonlight & many stars tonite. Stood on the bridge for a long while. Ships moving along in paths of silver light. So calm, quiet & peaceful. And yet the watches were doubled. Danger lurked everywhere — our most critical period since the start of the journey

1942 February 26 Thurs. Sea becoming rough — wind rising. Quite clear, and air patrol most of the day. Didn't feel well so took nap in P.M. & to bed early at night. Wind very strong by night, 40-45 M.P.H.

119 Maine.

120 Although not tied to this specific convoy incident, German submarines *U-158* ([on its first patrol](#)) and *U-578* ([on its third patrol](#)) both sank vessels in this part of the Atlantic at this time. Germany's [Operation Paukenschlag](#) (Drumbeat) actively hunted ships along the American east coast.

121 5th General Hospital main body, Company B 109th Engineer Battalion, 79th Ordnance Depot Company. See *United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Chronology* [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/IRECHR.htm>] entry for 2 March 1942.

122 End of line after this word.

123 End of line after this word.

124 See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Observation_seaplane#Catapult_and_recovery_procedures], which has a photograph of the USS *Philadelphia* recovering a catapulted aircraft.

1942 February 27 Fri. Sure feel tough today. Wind blowing a gale — sea very rough, so my stomach is upset. Headcold, and I'm plenty homesick. Today at 4:30 PM our convoy & 1st two columns of ships pulled out for Iceland. 6 destroyers of British Navy picked us up.¹²⁵

1942 February 28 Sat. Still feel tough — so don't do much. Slept a few hours during the day. Minkel keeps me awake half the night. Usual day at sea, with the wind blowing harder — and the Atlantic swells breaking over the bow of the ship.

1942 February 29.¹²⁶ Another Sunday at sea; and still feeling bum. Early this A.M. a huge British bomber gave us air patrol — continually circling around our group of ships. This afternoon the ceiling became practically zero — so the bomber went home. Going along the coast of N. Ireland now — Belfast in the A.M.

MEMO.¹²⁷ Belfast was severely bombed Easter 1941.¹²⁸ Railroads — stations — wharves — storehouses — other bldgs demolished by incendiaries. Looks horrible and very little rebuilding; but very little time lost due to damage.

1942 Mon.¹²⁹ Pulled into port of [Belfast](#) this A.M. — Long channel well protected by mines, nets, etc. Docked at 12. Began to disembark 2 P.M. Left Belfast 5 P. for Kilrea¹³⁰ — 60 miles away. Found shelter for men in Nissen Huts.¹³¹ Off. in homes about the village.

125 See “Undefended shore: American antisubmarine operations in 1942” by Ed Offley, *Navy Times* journalistic reporting service, 20 May 2019 online article at [<https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2019/05/20/undefended-shore-american-antisubmarine-operations-in-1942/>]. The article writes in detail about U.S. Navy decisions and actions around this time period, and specifically mentions Convoy AT10 (which transported the first contingent of 34th Division soldiers in January 1942) and Convoy AT12 (which was Theo Murphy's convoy in February 1942) and the hand-off between U.S. and British naval escorts.

126 This entry has “Mar 1” penned in. See footnote for the printed journal page for March 1.

127 This and following two paragraphs are on the “MEMO” page between February and March in the diary book.

128 See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Belfast_Blitz] and [<https://wartimedi.com/article/belfast-blitz-the-easter-raid/>].

129 Written on the “MEMO” page, this and next paragraph apply to March 2.

130 [Kilrea](#), County Londonderry, is in the north central part of Northern Ireland, and well northwest of Belfast.

131 A [Nissen hut](#) is a prefabricated sheet steel half cylinder building designed by a Canadian engineer, Peter Nissen, during World War I and used extensively by the British. The American Quonset hut design was based on the Nissen hut.

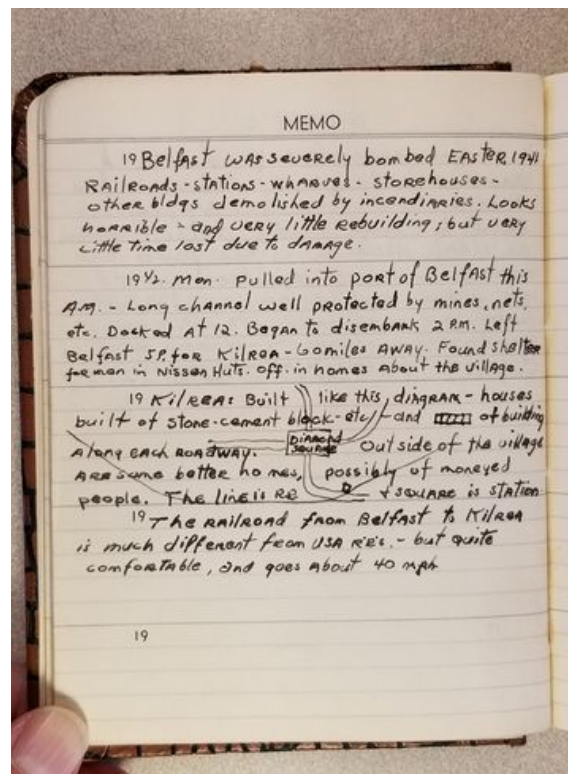


Figure 5: Layout diagram of Kilrea, Northern Ireland, drawn into the narrative.

Kilrea: Built like this diagram¹³² — houses built of stone-cement block — etc — and {diagram of townhouse-style connected buildings} of building along each roadway. Outside of the village are some better homes, possibly of moneyed people. The line is R.R. & square is station. The railroad from Belfast to Kilrea is much different from USA R.R.s — but quite comfortable, and goes about 40 m.p.h.

1942 March 1.¹³³ This entry under Feb. 29 — which shows how little I have kept the elapse of time. Other things on my mind — the sea — homesickness — little physical activity — and possibly some fear as to the outcome of our voyage. Physical & mental depression.

1942 March 2 Mon. Circled outside of harbor part of nite — waiting to go into harbor during day. Very cloudy & heavy fog — so visibility low. Two [Spitfires](#) came out to meet us. Saw many b.ballons¹³⁴ — bombers — etc. Dockworkers look shabby — poorly fed (1st. impression)

1942 March 3 Tues. Looked over the village quite extensively today. Talked with the people, & looked into stores. My first impression is poor — but hope it changes. People are friendly — but so

132 A diagram sketch runs through this paragraph of text in Theo's diary, depicting a "diamond square" at center of four roads, and a railroad line and station.

133 This entry was written on the journal page marked for March 1 itself. It apparently tells us to look under February 29 for the actual entry meant for March 1.

134 "b.ballons" are [barrage balloons](#), ground tethered and hoisting steel cables to interfere with dive bombers and V-1s.

backward as to business ways as we know them. The little children are the same as ours — and remind me of Jim - Tom & John Robert. No catholic church in town — one in country someplace.

1942 March 4 Wed. Today started to work. Took over all of the bldgs & facilities used by the troops — Nissen Huts — houses — stores — lofts — barns — the Orange Hall¹³⁵ — pump station — boiler room — [Ulster Constabulary](#) barracks — and other stys. Worked hard checking door nobbs — light fixtures — coat hooks — windows — etc.

1942 March 5 Thurs. Continued checking British property today. They are more exacting than us. I'm going to dump everything back to them just as soon as possible. Cold today — snowing & slushy & tonite is snowing & blowing & very cold. Saw a training film "[Victory in The West](#)." Quite gruesome — not disheartening.

1942 March 6 Fri. Writing this several days late — so forget some of the days happenings — may forget a lot more before we get home. More than likely Webster & I checking property. Cold at nite, so we sat in our parlor & had tea & talked till midnight.

1942 March 7 Sat. Worked on property as usual. Ready to sign over. Maj Phipps B.F.N.I.¹³⁶ called — had tea — listened to him drool for an hour. Mr & Mrs Webster — Deters & I went to Coleraine¹³⁷ & saw a movie tonite. Quite good — but walking around in blackout on a rainy nite in a busy town is quite an adventure. Link arms and walk down the center of the street. Drove home in blackout — 14 miles. Using Kuntz pen.¹³⁸

1942 March 8 Sunday. Slept so late I missed church¹³⁹ don't feel good about it. Drove over to Garvath¹⁴⁰ this A.M. to see about transportation, no luck. Sun shone bright this afternoon — so went out for a walk. Kuntz took pictures — so I'll get some. Shower & clean clothes, so had a big day.

1942 March 9 Mon. Over to Ballymoney¹⁴¹ this A.M. to meet Capt. Edwards B.A.N.I.¹⁴² in charge of D.I.D. methods & facilities for supplies quite inadequate according to what we are used to — but seems to work. Not so sanitary. Saw a show tonite — [Ziegfeld Girl](#) — quite good.

135 The local hall, lodge, or building of the [Orange Order](#), a fraternal organization based in Northern Ireland.

136 BFNI would be British Forces Northern Ireland. But see [<https://wartimeni.com/forces-in-northern-ireland/british-army/>], which uses "British Troops in Northern Ireland" (BTNI).

137 [Coleraine](#), County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, about 13 miles north-northwest of Kilrea, and on the River Bann near its mouth at the North Atlantic Ocean.

138 Last sentence apparently remarks about the changes in ink color during this diary entry.

139 End of line after this word.

140 [Garvagh](#), County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, a little less than six miles northwest from Kilrea. The 34th Infantry Division's 109th Quartermaster Battalion was stationed there during this time. See "United States Army in World War II: United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Stations of Units: Unit Cantonments" at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/nistat.htm>], and its description at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/readme.htm>].

141 [Ballymoney](#), County Antrim, Northern Ireland, north of Kilrea and southeast of Coleraine. The 53d Medical Battalion (V Corps) had just arrived at their station there on 3 March. See the *United States in World War II: United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Chronology* at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/IRECHR.htm>].

142 BANI would be British Army Northern Ireland.

1942 March 10 Tues. Today was pay day, the 1st in N.I. Got a sackful of British money, and came out even. Believe I'll get used to the exchange. Now the boys want to go to Belfast, to see girls of course. Getting our office fixed up swell. Whitmore moved in today.

1942 March 11 Wed. Over to Ballymena¹⁴³ again today to the 1st s.o.¹⁴⁴ meeting since Dix. Maj Wendt,¹⁴⁵ and really got something done. More work, but necessary. To U.S.¹⁴⁶ ration the 18th.¹⁴⁷ Also a P.X.¹⁴⁸ soon. Fair day in Kilrea, like our stock sales — but different. Cow — sheep & horse dung in streets, walks & other places. Have a pocket full of £ etc from 1st payday. Show tonite, Zorro.¹⁴⁹

1942 March 12 Thurs. A usual day — working, getting more things done, and better organized. Nothing more to write.

1942 March 13 Friday. Drove to Ballymena¹⁵⁰ again this A.M. to see the off. {}¹⁵¹ barracks. Met Capt. Harvey, a Scottish off. Got lined up on return of British goods. Started for Belfast at 2 PM — Kuntz, Parke,¹⁵² Deters, Connell, Gleason, Geronson.¹⁵³ All at Grand Central Hotel. Parts of city badly demolished by Nazi Blitz.

1942 March 14 Saturday. Back to Robinson & Cleaver¹⁵⁴ to shop. Deters bought beautiful tablecloth. I got luncheon cloth for M'Belle. Want to go back & buy more next payday. Went out to dog races in P.M. To a stage show at nite “Tony Draws a Horse.” Out in the blackout till midnight.

143 Ballymena, County Antrim, Northern Ireland, southeast of Kilrea, and roughly one third the way to Belfast.

144 “s.o.” is “staff officer”. The staff officers within a command would meet together to discuss and coordinate operations, plans, and logistics.

145 Major Wendt was possibly Walter W. Wendt (born 1914), who in February 1941 was a captain in Headquarters Company Special Troops 34th Division. See page 19, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/19/mode/1up>].

146 End of line after this word.

147 American troops had been eating British rations in Northern Ireland up until 18 March 1942, when American rations started being served. See *United States in World War II: United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Chronology* at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/IRECHR.htm>].

148 “P.X.” is “post exchange” — essentially a retail store.

149 By this time, there were a number of Zorro productions, movies and serials. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zorro#American_theatrical_feature_films].

150 Ballymena served as the location of the United Kingdom's 61st Infantry Division headquarters. The division covered County Antrim, County Londonderry, and County Tyrone. See [[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/61st_Infantry_Division_\(United_Kingdom\)#Deployment_to_Northern_Ireland](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/61st_Infantry_Division_(United_Kingdom)#Deployment_to_Northern_Ireland)].

151 Illegible. Could be “1/c” or “i/e” or something else.

152 Possibly John Parke (born 1911), who in February 1941 was a captain in Company H 136th Medical Regiment. See page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

153 Possibly Elmer G. Geronson (born 1914), who in February 1941 was a technical sergeant in Company E 136th Medical Regiment. See page 244, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/244/mode/1up>].

154 Robinson & Cleaver, Ltd., a department store at the corner of Donegall Place and Donegall Square North in Belfast.

1942 March 15. Continued seeing Belfast — Mass in AM. — to docks in the rain — out to Botanical Gardens in P.M. then to Zoological Gardens. A very nice trip — and want to return someday. Trip home in an ambulance. Trip wasn't too costly, and got a little better idea of Northern Ireland.

1942 March 16 Monday. Busy all day. Over to the QM at A¹⁵⁵ to check on the Class I issue depot.¹⁵⁶ Met some off. from the trip over — Walls — Lyons — Jones. Quite a mess there, but will improve, I'm sure. American food surely looks good.

1942 March 17 Tues. Drew rations — and received everything we are used to — apples — boneless beef — canned fruit — vegetables — butter — and hard candy. Getting out supply reports by company, to be consolidated by Bn & forwarded. To Portstewart¹⁵⁷ to a show.

1942 March 18 Wed. Just the usual day — lots of details to look after. A lousey show in Town Hall at nite "[Secret Agent](#)." Food getting better each day — fried rabbit for dinner. Geo. Brooks¹⁵⁸ caught a 4 # pike today, & other fish. Guess I'll have to get some equipment & see what I can catch.

1942 March 19 Thurs. Deters sick today — upper respiratory infection. Seems to get quite a few of our men, but it lasts only a few days. Guess we are going to have a dance band & put on dances — to build up a fund for the Bn.¹⁵⁹ Instruments are scarce — hard to get.

1942 March 20 Friday. Thinking a lot about home today. Wonder if my cablegrams — air mail letters etc. are getting thru to Maebelle — does she know I'm o.k. — How are they getting along. Suppose the snow is about all melted & the boys coming home wet & muddy. The tulips & crocus sticking their noses out of the ground. Spring is here.

1942 March 21 Sat. Half a day of work — a good dinner a walk, & then a bath. Food has been wonderful the past week. The afternoon sunshiny so walked to the river w/ Kuntz — Josephs & Platte. Watched the soldiers fish for perch & pike. Inspected a fish hatchery — the eel traps, etc. Deters quite sick, infected throat.

155 "A" is likely Antrim. See 1942 March 23. [Antrim](#), County Antrim, Northern Ireland, is southeast of Kilrea, roughly two thirds the way to Belfast. From 2 March to 14 December 1942, Antrim was the station of the 246th Quartermaster Depot Company (Supply) (V Corps). See "United States Army in World War II: United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Stations of Units: Unit Cantonments" at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/nistat.htm>], and its description at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/readme.htm>].

156 Class I generally includes food and drinking water. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Classes_of_supply].

157 [Portstewart](#), County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, on the shore of the North Atlantic Ocean 4 miles north-northwest of Coleraine and 17 miles north-northwest of Kilrea.

158 Probably George A. Brooks (born 1919), who in February 1941 was a private first class in Company D 136th Medical Regiment. See page 242, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, <https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/242/mode/1up>].

159 "Bn" is "battalion".

1942 March 22 Sun. Got up early & walked 2 miles into country to Mass.¹⁶⁰ Big stone structure 200 or so years old. An invigorating walk. The afternoon was sunshiny — so walked down to the river again. Must get out more — am much too fat & tire easily.

1942 March 23 Mon. Went to Belfast this A.M. Very heavy mist or fog. Qm¹⁶¹ business: then back to Antrim to get a truckload of orgn equipment. Put in the afternoon on a training schedule, which won't work to well, I'm sure.

1942 March 24 Tues. Our Bn organizing a dance band and it has a lot of promise. Bought instruments in Belfast for 3 times a normal price. Co. D moved into C.C.S.¹⁶² today, and off.¹⁶³ mess moved there also. Most off. moving into quarters there.

1942 March 25 Wed. Got 2 peeps¹⁶⁴ & a 1½T truck today. Have a room at the C.C.S. Took a long walk w/ Connell — beautiful day. The C.C.S. used to be a manor house — then a convent.¹⁶⁵ Beautiful grounds — a very secluded grotto on a hill overlooking a small hill protected lake.

1942 March 26 Thurs. Moved into my room. Have it fixed up quite well, table — 2 chairs clothes rack & wash stand. Need a floor covering. Had tea at Shiels — quite a crowd. My heated¹⁶⁶ smoked, then went out — so slept cold. Would much rather be closer to my company. Letters fr. home Hurrah.

1942 March 27 Friday. Lots of traveling today — rations, s.o. meeting. An off. in every vehicle is rather asenine, but the generals order. Re-read my mail — and feel much better now. Family all o.k. Deters in my room reading while I write. A long letter to “my honey.”

1942 March 28 Sat. Busy all morning. Loafed all afternoon. Talked with Corcoran & we walked around the convent grounds. This must have been a beautiful place in its “heyday.” Dance tonite by our new band. Made 15 £. (\$60.00)

160 Likely St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church, 1½ miles southwest of Kilrea along Drumagarner Road. See the 1942 May 31 entry.

161 quartermaster. See [<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Quartermaster>].

162 “CCS” is “casualty clearing station”, the British expression for what the Americans called a “clearing station”. The British had casualty clearing stations as part of their medical evacuation chain in the Great War (1914-1918). See [<http://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/soldiers/a-soldiers-life-1914-1918/the-evacuation-chain-for-wounded-and-sick-soldiers/>], which describes the WWI CCS function and gives a sketch plan. See [<https://www.med-dept.com/articles/brief-overview-of-the-medical-department/>] for an equivalent American WWII clearing station function description and sketch. The British did operate a casualty clearing station at Kilrea.

163 “off.” is “officer”.

164 “Peep” was a popular early 1940s name among soldiers for the quarter-ton class of reconnaissance vehicles now known exclusively as “jeep”. See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Willys_MB#Etymology].

165 This description matches one in the “Historic Kilrea Walking Heritage Trail” leaflet published in the Northern Ireland Community Archive at [https://niarchive.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Kilrea_Leaflet-Pages-APPROVED.pdf]. A location in the leaflet map says, “St Anne's Church was built in 1983. Previous to this, the congregation worshipped in the Oratory at the Manor House, which had been purchased for the Mercy Order of Nuns, by Rev D MacCreas, P.P. in 1924. The nuns ran a school for girls called St Anne's Mercy Convent.” The Manor House is also depicted in the leaflet. We find the Manor House geographic coordinates to be 54.95269, -6.54850 . The Manor House is at the north end of “Kathleen's Lough” (according to [OpenStreetMap.org](https://www.openstreetmap.org)), and is a half kilometer west of River Bann.

166 Probably meant “heater”, but handwritten definitely as “heated”.

1942 March 29 Sunday. Dreary & rain today. Rode Hardins¹⁶⁷ “bike” out to church this A.M. Chicken dinner. Most of afternoon in my room reading. Quite comfortable. Out for a short walk with Deters. Minkel — Deters — Connell & I played cribbage tonite. Reading Mar. 1st New York Times now. Lots of news.

1942 March 30 Mon. Busy all day — getting out reports. Rained some, then cleared up. Tried to buy a bike. The Irishman wanted too much money. These folks are poorly educated, but natural traders — and plenty sharp. Like everyone, take advantage of the soldiers if they can.

1942 March 31 Tues. Writing this on Easter Sunday — so don't remember a lot happening this date. Must have been busy, usually am. All days now are cut along the same pattern. Went to a movie tonite “Boris Karloff in [The Man Who Changed His Mind](#).” Was lousy, as is nearly all English pictures, & everything else British.

MEMO. 1942 April - Wed. Connell & I rode an ambulance out on a bicycle hunt this afternoon. Stopped 1st at Maghera¹⁶⁸, a nice little town somewhat like Kilrea, but nicer. I got a 2d. hand, small size bike for £2-10' — a good buy. Then drove over the mountains to Dungiven¹⁶⁹ Saw a lot of old bikes, but Connell didn't get one.

1942 April 1 Thurs.¹⁷⁰ Nobody fooled today — even the promised German air attack didn't come off. Only thing that did come off was Deters foreskin. Parke circumcised him this morning. See I'm getting all mixed up in my dates again. Time doesn't mean a lot now — just marking time till we can go home.

1942 April 2. This will be _March MEMO_. Has been an eventful month — coming into this town of Kilrea the 2d, at nite, blackout, feeling around strange places, finding a place to sleep, then walking around the black, deserted streets to stretch our legs — used to the blackout now — have seen many towns — and am quite familiar with the entire set up.

1942 April 3 Friday. Just another day in a supply officer's life. Getting food, hauling coal, sending out motor vehicle details, inspecting buildings & fixtures, and then the Div. s.o. meeting. Utilities Officer job is a big one. Many reports, & much responsibility. Have an assistant in Lt. Gleason. Received three letters from home today.

167 Hardin was possibly Robert C. Hardin (born 1913), who in February 1941 was a captain in Company G 136th Medical Regiment. See page 229, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/229/mode/1up>].

168 [Maghera](#), County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, about 8½ miles southwest from Kilrea.

169 End of line after this word. [Dungiven](#), County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, 14½ miles west of Kilrea and 11¼ miles northwest of Maghera.

170 This entry was written on the “April 1” printed diary page, although April 2 was a Thursday in 1942.

1942 April 4 Sat. Made a trip to Kinnegar today to get supplies.¹⁷¹ Have my room hooked up with two elec. heaters — quite comfortable. Re read my letters — got a big kick out of Jim & Toms, & of course enjoy M'Belle's so much. She crowds in a lot of "home & family", just what I need. To confession this P.M. & read late tonite.

1942 April 5 Sun. Easter Sunday. Time goes ahead 1 hr. Slept late — up & cleaned up well. To early Mass & communion. Church was packed & many soldiers. Fr. McGuire not a good talker. Sunshiny but squalls & much wind. Typical early April day at home.

1942 April 6 Mon. Usual day as far as work is concerned. This evening took a 8 mile bike ride with Capt. Connell. The country is most beautiful if you cycle thru it slowly & look everything over slowly. Stopped at Moore Lodge to visit Sir William.¹⁷² Very hospitable family — historic old home — beautiful grounds. More later.

1942 April 7 Tues. Trip to Dungiven this A.M. for rations. Connell bought a bike for £3-10'. O.K. Looked over a scabby old castle — is a dirty little town. British Capt. talked on counter-intelligence at 1600. Lousey-scheming people. Another fine ride into the country with Connell.

1942 April 8 Wed. But no half day off for me. Got out a cost report on British facilities. Bike ride w/ Kuntz — Connell — Col. Fourt¹⁷³ & Josephs. Finished reading *Dragon Seed*.¹⁷⁴ The Japs must be a treacherous, degenerate, bruteish race of people.

1942 April 9. This has been a good day — even tho it has poured down rain. Letters from home — 2 full of news, and in each a note from the boys. Also a letter from Maj. Petersen. He is getting a big chance & I'm glad. (elated). Home town paper of Mar. 12, but still news. A St. Patrick card from Des¹⁷⁵ & family. Must write home tonite. Saw a good show "[The Plainsman](#)". Lots of work out today.

1942 April 10. Wrote to Maj Pete — giving all the news, in a way only he will understand. Supply meeting — news about the "Empire Seal."¹⁷⁶ For a long bike ride w/ Connell — Kuntz — Fourt —

171 American ordnance troops and quartermaster units were at Kinnegar in 1942. Kinnegar was a logistics base at [Holywood](#), just northeast of the port of Belfast. See mentions of Kinnegar at [https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/Beachhd_Btlefrnt/ChapterVI.html], [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/IRECHR.htm>], and [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/nistat.htm>].

172 Possibly this was [Sir William Moore, 1st Baronet](#), (1864 – 1944) of Rosnashane, Ballymoney. He had inherited the Moore Lodge estate from a relative.

173 Arthur S. Fourt (born 1895), who in February 1941 was a Medical Corps lieutenant colonel in the Division Surgeon's Office 136th Medical Regiment. See page 230A, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/n234/mode/1up>].

174 "*Dragon Seed*" by Pearl S. Buck, published 1942, a political novel of the Japanese invasion of China in the 1930s.

175 Theo's younger brother, Desmond P. Murphy.

176 Possibly the marine vessel *Empire Seal* (renamed from [MV Californian](#)), a cargo ship that had sailed from New York on 17 February 1942 and was torpedoed two nights later off Nova Scotia. Only one of the 57 crew was lost.

Lebeau — Fishbury & McLachlan — covered 25 miles — Portglennon — Lough Neagh — A'Hoghill — Cully-¹⁷⁷ backy¹⁷⁸ & home. Really a grand way to see everything.

1942 April 11 Sat. Worked until 2 P.M. Went thru the R.U.C.¹⁷⁹ barracks, then Connell & I took another long ride — Garvagh — Maghera — & back to Kilrea. Fine day — got tired but enjoyed the trip. Reading letters from home again tonight.

1942 April 12 Sunday. Slept late this A.M. but up in time for breakfast & 10 AM Mass. Rode out w/ Severa.¹⁸⁰ Lots of Catholic boys in our Bn. Disagreeable day — so didn't do much. Short ride about 5 P.M. w/ Deters & Kuntz.

1942 April 13. Monday. Rain today, as it has been for several days. To Dungiven for rations. Busy all day on property & utilities. Seems to be more work for me all of the time — but I like it when there is something to do.

1942 April 14. Tuesday. This day is much better sunshine & warming up. Farmers getting ground into shape for planting — sacking potatoes — pulling turnips, etc. Grass is long & very green now. Rode 20 miles tonite.

1942 April 15. Wednesday. Have a new portable picture show outfit — gift of Red Cross. Using American shows. “[Flame of New Orleans](#)” — Marlene Diedrich & rather good. Bought 5 good steaks tonite — Connell — Gersonsen — Mclachlin¹⁸¹ — Josephs & I had a feed.

1942 April 16. Thurs. Sun still shining — 3 in a row. Getting in much new med. supplies — Got some rifles — [Lee-Enfields](#) w/ [Morris tube for .22 amm.](#) Shot many times & got a crow. Played badminton; good exercise.

1942 April 17. Fri. Very busy day. Rations — utilities — supply meeting, etc. Met Maj _____ & Capt Cook today. Sun still shining — took a 25 mile ride tonite, until 10 P.M. & still very light. Beautiful country — down one side of Bann Valley¹⁸² — back the other.

1942 April 18. A fine, sunshiny day. Expected a visit from Gen. Marshall, but it didn't materialize. Hq Det looking better each week. Started out on a bike trip to Port Rush¹⁸³ this P.M. Got a severe

177 End of line after this dash.

178 Likely [Portglenone](#), [Lough Neagh](#), [Ahoghill](#), [Cullybackey](#). The villages are in County Antrim, north of the lough (lake).

179 Royal Ulster Constabulary. See 1942 March 4 entry.

180 Possibly Leo G. Severa (born 1910), who in February 1941 was a captain in Company H 136th Medical Regiment. See page 230A, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/230/mode/1up>].

181 Possibly Edward J. McLachlan (born 1907), who in February 1941 was a staff sergeant in Company G 136th Medical Regiment. See page 247, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/247/mode/1up>].

182 [River Bann](#) is just east of Kilrea. This long river originates in the Mourne Mountains in the southeast corner of Northern Ireland, and flows north-northwest to Lough Neagh, then past Kilrea and Coleraine to enter the ocean between Castlerock and Portstewart.

183 “Port Rush” is now spelled “[Portrush](#)”, and is on the north coast of County Antrim, Northern Ireland.

headache so turned back — hot shower & bed for 3 hrs & felt much better. Letter fr. Maebelle. Poor Mary.¹⁸⁴

1942 April 19 Sunday. Sun is still shining. To Mass at 10 A.M. Got out a report, dinner, & now am going to write home. Had a ride in new country N. of Rosharkin¹⁸⁵ w/ Connell & Minkel. Hilly & barren — not the beautiful Bann Valley. Reading an interesting book “In Search of Ireland.”¹⁸⁶ Those little penguins in midocean were Guillemots.

1942 April 20. Mon. Made a trip to Colerine — Port Rush — Londonderry¹⁸⁷ — Limavady¹⁸⁸ & return to Kilrea. Port Rush & coast to Londonderry is beautiful, as is region around Castlerock.¹⁸⁹ Want to go again — more time to look around. Letters fr. Dr. Armstrong, Agnes¹⁹⁰ & Maebelle dated Mar. 9th. Rather slow — but glad to get them. Saw Pusey today.

1942 April 21. Tues. This day practically lost — cause all I have to offer is work & training. But both are necessary. I like to keep my hand in as an instructor. Talked with Capt Baker this afternoon. Our Bn may move 80 miles south, after getting well located here. New country, new scenery, so lets go.

1942 April 22. Wed. Work this AM — play this P.M. Sure like badminton. Four games, then a 16 mile bike ride. Went thru a 200 years old linen mill at Upperlands¹⁹¹. Been in the Clark family all of that time. Very interesting. Met Mr. Harry Clark & 2 sons.¹⁹² Charming people.

1942 April 23. Thurs. Saw my 1st Special Court trial¹⁹³ today. I investigated the case, preferred the charges, & appeared for the defense. Result: 3 months at hard labor & 2/3 pay for 2 months. This man was guilty as charged — but better than many not tried.

184 See the 1942 May 4 entry, but there is no further detail on Mary’s identity or condition. According to a family history book, *The Timothy Murphy Family History and Register of Descendents, Geneological Tables, Military Service Records and Index* (compiled by Clarence E. Murphy, a comb bound 79 page book privately printed in 1968 with a cover saying “The Murphys”), Theo had at least an aunt Mary Alberta (Murphy) Shea (born 1878, married 1903, died 1960) and a cousin Mary Vivian (Shea) Deeg (born 1909, married 1938, living in 1968). Both their husbands lived past the 1940s.

185 Now known as “Rasharkin”, the village in County Antrim was also historically spelled as “Rosharkin” and “Rosarkin”.

186 This may be the illustrated guidebook written by H.V. Morton and published in 1930.

187 Londonderry, also called Derry, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland.

188 Limavady, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland. The 34th Infantry Division’s 133d Infantry Regiment was there. See “United States Army in World War II: United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Stations of Units: Unit Cantonments” at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/nistat.htm>], and its description at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/readme.htm>].

189 Castlerock, a seaside village in County Londonderry, Northern Ireland. The 34th Infantry Division’s 151st Field Artillery Battalion was stationed there at the time. See “United States Army in World War II: United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Stations of Units: Unit Cantonments”.

190 Theo’s younger sister, Agnes A. Murphy.

191 Upperlands, County Londonderry, Northern Ireland, about 6 miles southwest of Kilrea.

192 This would have been either Henry Jackson Clark M.B.E (born 1869) and two of his multiple sons, or son Henry Francis Clark (born 1904) and his possible sons. See [<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Clark-67329>] and [<https://harryjacksonclark.com/>]. Also see [<https://www.ardtara.com/history/>] for a history of their home (Ardtara), mill, and linen business (William Clark and Sons).

193 A special court martial is mid range between a summary court martial and a general court martial, and usually tries misdemeanor offenses.

1942 April 24. Fri. Rumor of Bn move confirmed — so will have a lot of work to do: all British & some American stores to be transferred to 53d Med.¹⁹⁴ G4 surprised when informed. Well, such is the life of a supply man — never caught up — always something to do. Weather still holding good.

1942 April 25. Sat. Nice day — so worked all morning & went to see the Giants Causeway¹⁹⁵ this afternoon; 8 mi NE of Port Rush. Wonderful sight. Stopped at ruins of [Dunluce Castle](#). Last 2 mi into Port Rush rode along beach, part of time in surf of the Atlantic. Shopped for linen — lunch, then started for home 22 miles away. 30 mi today.

1942 April 26. Sunday. Up late & pedaled out to church. Sure am tired out from the trip yesterday. Today took a trip to our new location — Irvine Castle¹⁹⁶. Is a new American camp, not completed, but wonderful promise. Is so elaborate in all detail that I don't think it is intended for us — for very long.

1942 April 27. Monday. Today arose early — got a fleet of 18 - 6x6s¹⁹⁷ & after 11 AM got Co. D started for Irvine -¹⁹⁸ town. Lots of work. Went over our entire set-up with Lt. Ziel. We are to be completely out of Kilrae by May 4. Natives are very curious & ask many questions.

1942 April 28. Tues. Feeling pretty tough — throat very sore; but lots of work. Getting caught up on salvage work. About 5 truck loads of flattened cans & 2 loads of bundled paper. Also getting out utilities reports. Officer supervision is quite lax in places and shows up by poor work — loss of time etc.

1942 April 29. Wed. Afternoon off — so took a trip to Randallstown¹⁹⁹, to see the “Old Bleach Linen Factory”. They make the finest linen in the world. Deters — Gallo & Connell went along. Saw the weaving of tablecloths & many other articles — from raw flax to hand painted articles. Bought 2 cloths & a luncheon set.

1942 April 30. Thurs. Moved “C” today — lock, stock & barrel. Also part of equipment of A - B. Long trip & they started late. Warm & dry now — no rain for 2 weeks — so the water supply is getting low. Received 9 peeps - 3 amb & 10 1½T trucks²⁰⁰ today. Things are rolling in now.

MEMO. Fri. Very busy. Loaded & moved out 16 loads of equipment to the new camp. Looks like we are going to be in a mess — camp not ready for us. G4 meeting — nothing new. Beat Deters 3 out of 4 at badminton at 10 P.M. last nite.

194 53d Medical Battalion (V Corps), at this time located in Ballymoney, County Antrim. See [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/nistat.htm>].

195 [Giant's Causeway](#) consists of basalt columns from an ancient volcano eruption, and lies along the north coast of County Antrim in Northern Ireland.

196 [Necarne Castle](#), also known as Castle Irvine, is in County Fermanagh, in the southwestern part of Northern Ireland, immediately south of [Irvinestown](#) and about 55 miles southwest of Kilrea.

197 The [6-ton 6x6 truck](#) had six-wheel drive and was built to move 6 tons of cargo over all terrain and in all weather.

198 End of line after this dash.

199 [Randalstown](#), County Antrim, Northern Ireland, about 17 miles southeast of Kilrea.

200 A 1½ ton capacity 4x4 wheel drive truck, probably the [Chevrolet G506](#).

MEMO. April in Ireland — altogether a very pleasant month; one during which I visited many interesting places — got a new slant on the country and its people “poor devils,” and found that they are not at all dumb.

1942 May 1. Friday: Pulled the usual “boner.” Put this day in the memo column for April. Anyway — can add that it has been a very busy day, so one well spent.

1942 May 2. Sat. Today met a very nice RAF officer, and Deters & I rode up to the Giants Causeway w/ him. Not so impressed this time. Back to Port Rush for “fish & chips” & a movie. Greer Garson & W. Pidgeon in a splendid show — can’t remember the name²⁰¹ — but I felt so lost because I was reminded so much of home & my family.

1942 May 3. Sun. Nothing much today — Church, dinner, badminton, supper, & a “flesh show.” Quite good, and a change of entertainment. The weather continues fair & sunshiny. Evenings cool & nites quite chilly. Is so different than what we were told it would be.

1942 May 4. Monday. Wonderful day — three letters from Maebelle & I from Art Johnson.²⁰² Lots of good news from home. Mary getting along well²⁰³, boys doing good in school, family busy & happy, Dad & mom O.K. Good food for the mind & body.

1942 May 5. Tuesday. Busy all day, but not much accomplished. Usual supply duties. Still fair weather; and local people complaining of the dry spell. Just like our farmers at home. Even say the water supply is getting low.

1942 May 6. Wed. Started some revolver practice today. May need the training some day — hope not. My boys lost a close ball game to A — 5 to 4. Lots of exercise at badminton. Should lose some weight. Cribbage tonite w/ Deters — Connell — Platte.

1942 May 7 Thurs. Connell & I took a cold ride to Castle Irvine, & back. New camp coming along slow. Visited the Royal Enniskillens Depot²⁰⁴ at Omagh²⁰⁵. Quite an old place. This AM shot a good score in revolver practice.

1942 May 8. Friday. Things slow — not very much activity. Communications poor — I had to re-submit 3 reports, lost thru msg. center²⁰⁶ Nothing new at G-4 meeting. Possibility of something popping soon.

201 “*Blossoms in the Dust*”. The even better known “*Mrs. Miniver*” wouldn’t be released until later in the summer.

202 Arthur Leslie Johnson (1907-1965), an attorney and resident of Ida Grove, Iowa. Arthur and his wife lived on Taylor Street, across an alley from Theodore and Maebelle Murphy’s house on Quimby Street.

203 Compare with the 1942 April 18 entry, when Theo reacts to a previous letter from Maebelle.

204 The [Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers](#), a British Army regiment having a garrison depot in Omagh.

205 [Omagh](#), County Tyrone, Northern Ireland, about 16 miles northeast of Castle Irvine.

206 End of line after this word. “msg.” is “message”.

1942 May 9. Sat. Got out a batch of work this A.M., then Capt. Connell & I started on a hunt for Sanders, who was to report to Belfast. Drove to Ballymena, Larne²⁰⁷ Cushenden,²⁰⁸ Ballycastle,²⁰⁹ Portrush, & home. Didn't find Sanders, but had a fine trip — beautiful seacoast²¹⁰ Saw Scotland, from 12 miles away.

1942 May 10. Sun. Slept late — first time since landing in Ireland, & missed church. Connell, Deters & I took a bike trip to Broadstone — up on top of a high rocky ridge. Piece of black rock 8' x 10' 15" - 18" thick on pillars 4½' - 5' high. St. Patrick preached to the native Irish & converted them to Catholicism.²¹¹

1942 May 11. Mon. To Belfast today to Utilities Off. meeting. Quite interesting, especially on salvage. My reports the only ones in Force O.K.²¹² Talked with Col. Brenn²¹³ on Med. Sup. — & Capt. Cook on Kilrea water situation. Bought a belt for my uniform. Deters along for company. Met many officers.

1942 May 12. Tues. Just work, getting out reports, req., etc. Exercise playing badminton — then a 10 mile bike ride to Tamlaght O'Crilly²¹⁴ with Connell. He talks of their coming baby — and both of us long for home. Home town paper of Apr. 2d to read — not much news.

1942 May 13 Wed. Fair day. Spring hireing day. Horses, pigs, cattle, calves, everywhere & crap ankle deep on the streets, sidewalks, doorways, & against bldgs. A large crowd of people — the diamond filled with traveling merchants selling 2d hand clothes — new & 2d hand shoes, rope, hardware, plants etc. Cure all medicine speelers,²¹⁵ a stunt man — many beggars — and some pick pockets, I'm sure. Very colorful.

1942 May 14. Thurs. Continued good weather — but nites cold. More orders today & may mean move soon. Teaching again & is kinda nice. Show tonite “[Abe Lincoln in Illinois](#), very good. No letters from home, but the April 16th paper. Still cow dung all over the streets. Five of my men now in Glasgow, Scotland. Wish I was there myself.

207 End of line after this word.

208 Read as “[Larne, Cushendun](#)”, which are a town and a village separated by 28 miles on the northeast coast of Northern Ireland, both in County Antrim.

209 [Ballycastle](#), County Antrim, Northern Ireland. The portion of the trip from Ballymena to the coast at Larne and counterclockwise along the northeast coast to Portrush is about 80 miles long.

210 No punctuation here in the diary. Seeing Scotland (specifically, the [Mull of Kintyre](#)) at 12 miles distance would have required driving from Cushendon along the coast road to Torr Head and then to Ballycastle.

211 Catholicism

212 Headquarters, United States Army Northern Ireland Force (USANIF) officially established itself at Wilmont House, 7 miles southwest of Belfast, in January 1942. See [<https://wartimeni.com/location/co-antrim/dunmurry/wilmont-house/>] and [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/IRECHR.htm>].

213 According to “United States Army Forces in Northern Ireland: Key Personnel” at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/IREPER.htm>], Lieutenant Colonel Charles E. Brenn was the U.S. Army V Corps Surgeon.

214 Tamlaght O'Crilly, Maghera, Northern Ireland, a village about 7 miles south-southwest of Kilrea.

215 spieler = similar to a circus barker, a person who gives an impassioned speech meant to persuade a purchase

1942 May 15. Friday. A very busy day — up early & in Castle Irvine at 9:30. Left there at 11:15 & back to dinner at 1:10. Then to Bellamena to S.O. meeting. Many new S.O.s in — & many promotions. Talked w/ Capt. Cashman. Getting cleaned up ready to move on short notice, moving med. prop.²¹⁶ into Belfast.

1942 May 16. Sat. Kind of a bad day so didn't get to do much this afternoon. Heavy rain — lightning & thunder, & lights were out until nearly 2330 hrs²¹⁷ Movie at 1:30 "[Fleets In](#)," quite good. Maj Paulus²¹⁸ back with us. Deters to a 1 day "Intelligence School."

1942 May 17 Sunday. Still raining — to church & got wet. Going to write home. And did — a long letter to M'Belle. Loafed most of day. More rain. Paulus in room next to me. Nothing more to write. Know new locations now.

1942 May 18. Mon. Letter from Liming & Boney Hester today. News from home. Plenty of work on utilities report — maps, streets, sewage, water, bldgs, etc. Won at poker — 1st time in months.

1942 May 19. Tues. More reports etc to get out — so I'll be ahead of the game. Lt Wilson said we move 28 May to June 3d. Connell, Paulus & I on bike ride — easy 8 miles.

1942 May 20. Wed. Worked all morning. Umpired a ball game this afternoon — we lost. Five letters from home. Bike ride w/ Fourt & Connell — easy 10 miles. Badminton — show — letter to M'Belle — sponge bath — so now to bed. 11 P.M. & still light

1942 May 21 Thurs. Got out the days work during the morning — then took a trip in P.M. to check on med supplies of 185-125-135.²¹⁹ Met Capt Lyons & Hancock, & talked w/ Maj Andreasen. Portrush was a very pleasant sight — blue Atlantic — white sand — warm sunshine. A pleasant day.

1942 May 22. Friday. Up early & to Irvineston again to pick up med. sup. & check up on Whitmore²²⁰ A quick trip — back to Off. mess for dinner. Then on to S.O. meeting. Nothing new. Met Capt. Moore & Lt. Gunther, 125 & DivArt²²¹ S.O.s. Badminton tonite — walk uptown & now to bed.

1942 May 23. Sat. To Belfast today — supplies, gen. & med. Met Maj Hicks. Bought a trench coat w/ a wool lining, detachable. Cost 27.00 (£6-16'-6d) & is worth it. Rained quite hard during the day. Belfast isn't much of a city — poor in appearance, like the people.

216 medical property

217 End of line after this word.

218 Probably Edward W. Paulus (born 1909), who in February 1941 was a major in Headquarters 3rd Battalion 136th Medical Regiment. See page 228, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/228/mode/1up>].

219 The only units using these numbers in the 34th Infantry Division were the 125th Field Artillery Battalion, 135th Infantry Regiment, and 185th Field Artillery Battalion.

220 End of line after this word. Whitmore was possibly Ralph L. Whitmore (born 1910), who in February 1941 was a staff sergeant in Company H 136th Medical Regiment. See page 251, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/251/mode/1up>].

221 34th Infantry Division Artillery.

1942 May 24. Sunday. Up & to Mass. Connell & I moved to old officers mess this afternoon & moved the mess back also. Will be quite convenient for the time we will be here. Have a comfortable room, & my elec. heaters. Enso show tonite — quite good — vodvil²²² type & some fine string music.

1942 May 25. Mon. Continued rain. Completed organizing the trip south & will go down in the A.M. Went to hear a lecture on Ulster²²³ tonite. Very good — interesting as to early history, culture, people, language, geography, & events fr. 1000 B.C. to date.

1942 May 26. Tues. Took advance party to new camp (Breandrum²²⁴). Find it quite a nice place — better than 1st. reported. Asked many questions, so know the general situation. Lough Erne²²⁵ is a beautiful lake. Killideas²²⁶ is quite a camp also.

1942 May 27. Wed. Completed turn over of C.C.S. to 16th C.C.S. (British)²²⁷. Lots of work & trouble. Found them, 16th., a good group, much better than usual. Lt. Walker quite a nice fellow — Lt. Col. Green quite gruff. — lots of rain today — no bicycling for some time.

1942 May 28. Thurs. This has been a hectic day. To many people to see, to many things to attend to. Last report to go in on C.C.S. Movement to line up & coordinate, etc. More rain today — much to much of it. Father McCrea wants Catholic soldiers to attend Mass in a body Sunday.

1942 May 29. Friday. Capt. Saunders, 61 Amm Coy came in & we checked the req bldgs. & Huts. Much minor damage — nothing serious. They moved out of here 6 months ago — now coming back for another rest. Had been here 18 mos. before.

1942 May 30. Sat. Continuing turn over to 61. Div. Amm. Coy.²²⁸ All thru w/ bldgs, & signed. Well started on stores, etc. Rain most of the day. Most U.S. soldiers are lazy unless they have a definite task assigned to them. Also disorderly, & in some cases out & out dirty. Going thru billets shows up many faults

1942 May 31. Sun. Organized a group of nearly 40 Catholic soldiers to form the Guard of Honor for the visit of the Bishop to Drumgarner Parish²²⁹. Was a celebration of the 100th year of the present

222 [vaudeville](#)

223 [Ulster](#) is the northern of the four [traditional Irish provinces](#), comprising the six counties of Northern Ireland as well as three counties in Ireland.

224 [Breandrum](#) is a 142 acre townland on the east side of [Enniskillen](#), County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, about 8 miles south of Castle Irvine.

225 [Lough Erne](#) is a set of two lakes in County Fermanagh, in the southwest corner of Northern Ireland. Its two lakes are on the north and south sides of Enniskillen.

226 [Killadeas](#) is a small village on the shore of Lower Lough Erne, the northern lake. It is 6 miles north of Enniskillen and less than 3 miles southwest of Castle Irvine.

227 Interestingly, the British 16th Casualty Clearing Station served at Gallipoli during World War I. See its 8 August 1915 entry at [<https://www.longlongtrail.co.uk/army/regiments-and-corps/locations-of-british-casualty-clearing-stations/>].

228 British 61st Infantry Division's Ammunition Company.

229 St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church at geographic coordinates 54.9333, -6.5789 along Drumagarner Road, 1½ miles southwest of Kilrea. [Drumagarner](#) itself is a 598 acre townland surrounding the church.

church bldg. Quite an occassion, high Mass — a Jesuit speaker. The Bishop is a good talker, and a young man.

MEMO. Mon.²³⁰ Up at 5 — breakfast at 5:30 The Bn. on the move by 7:10. They arrived at Breandrum Camp (Enniskillen) by 1200. I and rear party stayed at Kilrea to complete turnover to 61 Div Amm Coy. Thru by 2.00, & in Breandrum for supper. Much accomplished in a short time.

1942 June 1. Tues. Payday. To Omagh for the payroll. Gave some of the men merry hell for spending too much money in “pubs”. Taking over British property, stores, etc., and setting up my office. This will be a fine camp. My room is comfortable. Will be much better than Kilrea.

1942 June 2. Should have Tues in here — Mon was put in memo space for May.

1942 June 3. Wed. Today Jim²³¹ is ten. Wired some money & all my love to them, & birthday greetings to Jim & J.R. Would like very much to be home with them — even for a day.

1942 June 4. Thurs. Am writing this several days late — so don’t have much to say. I’m sure I worked all day — usually do. Saw a show, “[A Womans Face](#)” at a beautiful theater²³² in Enniskillen tonite. Very fine scenes on walls.

1942 June 5. Friday. Work all A.M. Supply officers meeting this P.M. Nothing new. Will draw all chem. warfare equipmt, and camouflage nets for vehicles. Is the ‘push off’ coming near. Young (ord off) is a new capt. Knockonoe House²³³ is quite a place, & Omagh is the best city (small) I’ve seen so far.

1942 June 6 Sat. This A.M. we had our 1st. full field inspection since 1st of Dec. Was quite good. This PM Deters, Connell & I “biked” for 23 miles. Castle Coole²³⁴ is quite a place, & beautiful grounds. Went to Linbellaw²³⁵ — McGuire’s Bridge²³⁶ — Brook haven²³⁷, & back to camp.

230 In 1942, Monday was June 1st and Tuesday was June 2nd. See Theo’s note in the 1942 June 2 entry.

231 Theo’s son, James.

232 Probably the Ardhowen Theatre on the south side of town.

233 Likely the Knocknamoe Castle, Omagh. See [<https://www.flickr.com/photos/usani4245/49658856071>], [<https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/33/a3343033.shtml>]. According to [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/nistat.htm>], the 2d Battalion 135th Infantry Regiment 34th Infantry Division was stationed in Omagh in 1942.

234 [Castle Coole](#) is a mansion 1 mile southeast of Enniskillen center.

235 [Lisbellaw](#) is a village in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, about 5 miles southeast of Enniskillen.

236 [Maguiresbridge](#) is a village in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, about 7½ miles southeast of Enniskillen.

237 [Brookeborough](#) is a village in County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, about 9½ miles east-southeast of Enniskillen.

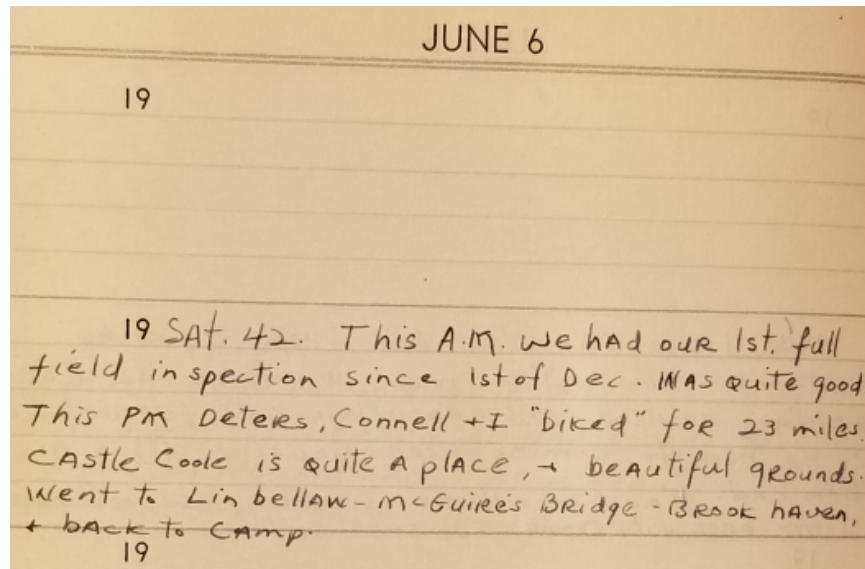


Figure 6: June 6 calendar page having 1942 entry in printed script.

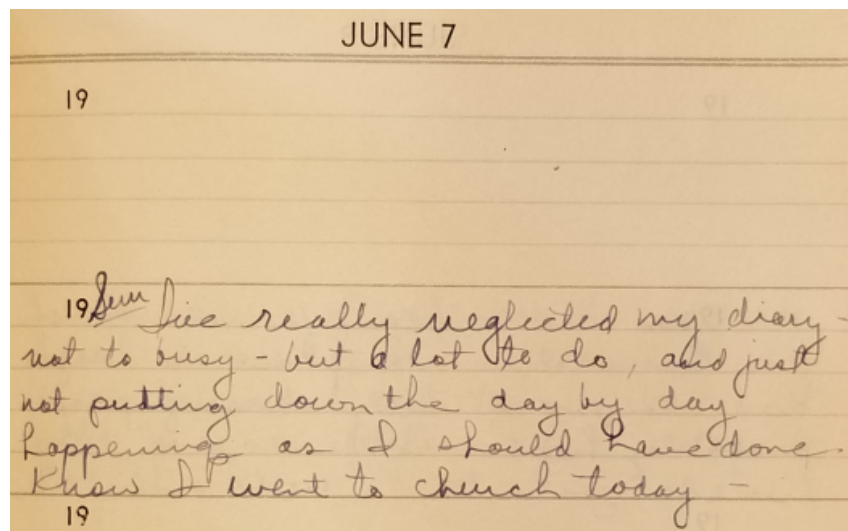


Figure 7: June 7 calendar page having 1942 entry in cursive script.

1942 June 7 Sun.²³⁸ I've really neglected my diary — not to busy — but a lot to do, and just not putting down the day by day happenings as I should have done. Know I went to church today —

1942 June 8 Mon. — in a beautiful old church in Enniskillen.²³⁹ The place is large, and was packed. Better class of people — probably have a little more of the worlds goods to do with. The altar

²³⁸ This is the entry where Theo Murphy switched from printed style back to cursive style writing.

²³⁹ That would be Saint Michael's Church, built in 1875 in the French Gothic Revival style of architecture, according to [<http://www.saintmichaels-parish.com/newspage.asp?dismode=article&artid=995>].

1942 June 9 Tues. — was of white marble, and well decorated. Also two side altars, also of marble. Walked in to town & back with Gallo. He is an Italian, & quite a devout Catholic.

1942 June 10 Wed. — Work at this camp is about the same as at Kilrea — lots of counting & checking of British property — continuing on equipping the Bn etc. Seems to be an endless job.

1942 June 11 Thurs. Med. Supply has moved over to Breandrum, and we are getting it peeled down to where it can be handled properly when we take the field. Lots of cajoling to get things done.

1942 June 12 Fri. Found out today we are moving to Irvine Castle Hosp — rumor before. Move tomorrow — so will be checking out here, and in over there. Wish reports would cease too.

1942 June 13 Sat. Good day for moving. Lt O'Rourke & I finished quickly — but lots of work waiting at the new place. Is known as Naval Base Hosp. Castle Irvine, and Necarne Castle.²⁴⁰

1942 June 14 Sun. A day of rest, so I didn't get up until 10:30. Have lost so much sleep during the week I decided to get caught up. Went to Mass in Irvinestown.²⁴¹ Was a full house.

1942 June 15 Mon. The big reason for building a large church in a small town is because the congregation is so large, and the people pack it full at each Mass. Quite nice — but needs some work.

1942 June 16 Tues. Need a parking area for our vehicles — so Capt. Watkins came over and we looked over the possible spots to use. In a day or so we will have a bulldozer to

1942 June 17 Wed. — level off the big piles of dirt. Won't take the machine long but would be many days work for hand labor. Started in today. Will haul about 800 tons of crushed

1942 June 18 Thurs. — rock in to make hard standing. Use large 6" x 8" chunks for a base — then 1½" pieces for a top coating. Utilities off. work is harder than supply work.

1942 June 19 Friday. Weather has been holding pleasant for several days now. Sun shines during the day — then it gets quite cool at night. Need plenty of covers.

1942 June 20 Sat. Have been out on a bike several times since coming over here. The country side is beautiful. Saw much of Loch Erne — and visited Archdale Field — a R.A.F.

1942 June 21 Sun. — Cataline Flying Boat base. Also saw five huge Sunderland Flying Boats. Is quite a fine seaplane base.²⁴² The British here are quite friendly & asked us to come back.

²⁴⁰ According to [<https://www.castleirvine.com/about/>], "In 1941 Necarne Castle was requisitioned by the United States Navy. It originally had 200 beds but was soon enlarged to a 500 bed institution and released to the American Army. The castle, then the 28th Station Hospital, cared for recuperating American soldiers and RAF personnel. After the war the castle was never inhabited again and fell to ruin."

²⁴¹ [Irvinestown](#), County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, is 8½ miles north of Enniskillen and less than 4 miles east of Lower Lough Erne. Sacred Heart Church was on the west side of town.

²⁴² [Royal Air Force Castle Archdale](#) was on the eastern shore of Lower Lough Erne, less than 4 miles west-northwest of Irvinestown and Castle Irvine. Both [Consolidated PBY Catalina](#) and [Short S.25 Sunderland](#) flying boat aircraft patrolled the North Atlantic from here. [A Catalina from here spotted the German battleship Bismarck on 26 May 1941](#), leading to the battleship's destruction the following day. An extensively illustrated page about RAF Castle Archdale is at [

1942 June 22. — Rode thru the [Archdale Castle](#) grounds, and like so many other places, the trees, bushes, and flowers are very beautiful. This is a very old place — the

1942 June 23. original castle was built around the year 1000 A.D. — only the tower & main entrance still standing. Is on a hill overlooking long stretches of the lake.

1942 June 24. Road work is coming along fine. Can park most of the Bn. vehicles on crushed rock, and have a satisfactory repair spot fixed up.

1942 June 25. Held up some cause the bulldozer is out on an exhibition problem with the engineers²⁴³ & some other units. They are putting on a show for the King & Queen of England.²⁴⁴ Went to a British

1942 June 26. Med. unit demonstration today, and can't say it is adequate, when compared to what our unit does for the Division. Saw all of the old M.A.C.s of our old Regt.²⁴⁵ All

1942 June 27. in the [1st Armored Div.](#) Armstrong & Brown came back with us for a day. A new T/O²⁴⁶ is out. Gives me 8 more men, & quite a few grades & ratings. Also promotions for 2d Lts to 1st.²⁴⁷

1942 June 28 Sun. And now I'm all caught up again, & hope I stay that way. Church — a fine dinner (strawberry shortcake) & some work. Have a water truck to haul water for us — so won't be so short.

1942 June 29. — But I didn't stay caught up. This day is 20 November²⁴⁸ — nearly five months since my last entry. The last of June was spent in preparation for a field maneuver to be held forepart of July —

1942 June 30. — also in building up facilities in Camp Clarion. Clarion, truly a fine camp. We kept very busy and the summer passed too rapidly. Long days and evenings — and the

MEMO. — Irish countryside continued to be fascinating. Dont remember many of the happenings — at least the run of the mill kind that occur repeatedly — but the Atlantic maneuver was a stand-

<https://www.wv2ni.com/cofermanaghairfields.htm>].

243 At this time, the 34th Infantry Division's 109th Engineer Battalion was stationed at nearby Killadeas. See [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/nistat.htm>].

244 King George VI and Queen Elizabeth visited Northern Ireland on 24 to 26 June 1942. They were in Belfast, County Down, and County Antrim, visiting both British and American troops, including the 1st Armored Division. See [<https://wartimeni.com/article/king-george-vi-and-queen-elizabeth-visit-northern-ireland/>].

245 Officers of the U.S. Army Medical Administrative Corps once in the 136th Medical Regiment.

246 "T/O" here is "Table of Organization". See [<http://www.militaryresearch.org/WhatisTOE.htm>] and [<https://www.med-dept.com/resources/list-of-medical-to-to-e/>].

247 second lieutenant to first lieutenant.

248 Explicit evidence that Theo had a long pause in diary writing after 28 June.

MEMO. -out affair. 34th Div & 61st British against 1st Armored & British 59th. Lasted 8 days²⁴⁹ — rained every day — slept in the mud — mangers of cow barns — had a cow walk

1942 July 1. over me during a pitch black night, bugs — rats — discomfort — mud, and still I enjoyed it. Moved north thru Pomeroy — Cookstown — Toome — Randallstown — Antrim and south to Crumlin.²⁵⁰ Won —

1942 July 2. — every day until the last day, and then the 1st Armored walked all over us. Those tanks really are a potent force to reckon with — Woke up the morning of the last

1942 July 3. day and had 20 right in our camp. Learned lots of things about my work during the maneuver — and now know I can carry my end of affairs. The men of my Co.²⁵¹ learned —

1942 July 4. — much also. Kept a good situation map posted with all changes, and talked to the men a couple of hours each day. Spent the 4th of July running all over the Irish landscape

1942 July 5. Arrived back in Clarion and went to work repairing equipment — cleaning clothing, and putting the camp into A-1 shape. Started to build a new water system, piped from a lake 2 miles —

1942 July 6. — away. Took a month — but it relieved a trying situation. Rains about 70 inches a year — bog land all around. And yet not enough water for a bath once a week — Finished

1942 July 7. the system, and could supply 90,000 gal. a day. Then started to build a sewage disposal plant. Quite a system — crude, but it works. My crew of 13 Irishmen are O.K., and outside of a little

1942 July 8. — trouble at the start (fired 3 men for loafing) get along fine. John Cox is the foreman — and a black, squint eyed little Irishman is chief plumber — and he has a beautiful tenor voice.

1942 July 9. — Sure surprised to hear him sing. Had lots of roads to repair and parking space to build — so keep very busy all thru July. Hauled and spread nearly 1000 yards of rock of various sizes.

1942 July 10. Latter part of July the Coll. Cos²⁵² went on maneuver again — and had to haul supplies 50 miles each way over the mountains. New country, so was interesting — but the mountain

1942 July 11. roads surely are tough to navigate — Twist & wind all over — lots of intersecting roads, and very easy to get lost. Rained most of the time — and the men living in tents.

249 This was Exercise ATLANTIC held 1 to 8 July 1942 to test cooperation between United States and British troops. See the “Background of Amphibious Operations” page at [<https://history.army.mil/documents/WWII/beaches/bchs-1.htm>], part of *The Administrative and Logistical History of the ETO, Part VI* at [<https://history.army.mil/documents/WWII/beaches/bchs-fm.htm>]. British units included the 61st Infantry Division, 59th (Staffordshire) Infantry Division, and 72nd Independent Infantry Brigade.

250 Pomeroy and Cookstown are in County Tyrone. Toome, Randalstown, Antrim, and Crumlin are in County Antrim. The path describes an arc from the middle of Northern Ireland toward the northeast, skimming around Lough Neagh to head south.

251 “Co.” is “Company”.

252 “Coll. Cos” is “Collecting Companies”. These would have been Company A, Company B, and Company C of the 109th Medical Battalion, with each collecting company assigned to support an infantry regiment’s aid station in the division. See [<https://www.med-dept.com/articles/the-ww2-medical-battalion-infantry-division/>].

1942 July 12. Not so many bicycle trips now — but get out with Connell — Paulus — Kuntz — and a few others occasionally. Evenings are still quite long — so have light until midnight.

1942 July 13. Playing a little badminton again — and it would be a great reducer if I would keep at it. Starting to grant leaves now for Scotland & England so Connell & I are trying for one together.

1942 July 14. July moved along rapidly — many things of interest of course, but nothing of great importance, so am finding it difficult to retrace my days and pick up enough to

1942 July 15. fill these pages. Hearing very often from home — Maebelle & Boys & Folks all well and quite happy — and of course waiting for the war to end. So are all of us — the sooner the better.

1942 July 16. Talked with most of the MAC officers that left us in Dix — Armstrong — Geise — Brown — Garrett²⁵³ — Dicky, and they are getting along fine. 1st Armored is quite

1942 July 17. an outfit. Brown & Armstrong came over for a short visit. Geise is Adj of Med Bn & Armstrong C.O. Hq. Det.²⁵⁴ Brown — Dickey — Garrett motor off. in A.B.C.²⁵⁵

1942 July 18. Running out of things to talk about — memory is a wonderful thing, if you have a good one. Still traveling around northern Ireland quite extensively — but have a few places

1942 July 19. I want to see. Belleek²⁵⁶, the home of famous Irish pottery — but so far it is out of bounds. Many officers have purchased some fine pieces from nearby stores — but I'm afraid of breakage

1942 July 20. or loss in shipment. Belleek is supposed to be quite a town on the west end of Lough Erne — most of it being in Donnegal²⁵⁷ — Free State. Also want to go to Strabane²⁵⁸ —

1942 July 21. on the Free State border. Then I will have covered all of Northern Ireland. Of course one has not see Ireland properly until going into the southern part. Could be arraigned, but the

1942 July 22. penalties are too great — Liable to be interned for the duration, and that means loss of pay, allowances, everything, including position.

1942 July 23. Tonite when I'm trying to get caught up on my diary entries I'm also giving an examination to fourteen of my men who failed in a previous exam. Seems like I should

253 George T. Garrett (born 1915), who in February 1941 was a first lieutenant in Headquarters & Service Company 136th Medical Regiment. See page 230, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/230/mode/1up>].

254 “C.O. Hq. Det.” is “Commanding Officer, Headquarters Detachment”.

255 These would be elements of the 47th Armored Medical Battalion in the 1st Armored Division. See [<https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/47th-armored-medical-battalion/>] for a unit history.

256 Belleek, County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, 20 miles northwest of Enniskillen and straddling the border with Ireland.

257 County Donegal, in Ireland (the Irish Free State until a new constitution in 1937), is 7 miles wide from Belleek westward to the North Atlantic Ocean.

258 Strabane, County Tyrone, Northern Ireland, is 32 miles north of Enniskillen and 35 miles northeast of Belleek.

1942 July 24. ask the questions, but I'm being questioned considerably — so my thoughts are being interrupted constantly. When I give an exam those that fail don't

1942 July 25. get passes until they retake and pass the examination. Quite effective, as the men are allowed 48 hour passes now. Some of the men are very good students — others not so good.

1942 July 26. July passed swiftly — and was splendid as far as weather was concerned. Nothing more eventful than the maneuver. August too went by rapidly. Continued

1942 July 27. the usual routine duties. Camp Clarion shaped up rapidly during the month, and took very little of my time. Connell & I were granted leave for nine days

1942 July 28. beginning Aug. 27th. Have our trip all planned — reading up in a travel book on Scotland & England. Rode up into Belfast in a 6x6 truck a day ahead of

1942 July 29. our scheduled leaving. Had a grand lobster dinner at the Carlton²⁵⁹, a couple of drinks, and a good nites sleep at the Midland Hotel. Met a air transport officer — Howard Trunnell of

1942 July 30. of St. Louis. He invited us out to Sydenham Airport²⁶⁰ to meet him at 9 AM the next morning. Made the contact and arraigned for a flight from Belfast to

1942 July 31. [Cambridge](#), England — was a wonderful trip in a huge Stirling bomber.²⁶¹ The thing was built in the shipyards in Belfast, and delivered to Bomber Command in various airports in -

MEMO. England. The trip was down the Irish coast until we crossed the Free State border then took off SE across the [Irish Sea](#). Surely was a beaut-

1942 August 1. iful sight. Took nearly an hour to cross the water, and hit the coast of Wales. Then turned due east across the midlands of England to Cambridge. Crossed many huge

1942 August 2. airports. The fields were full of all types of planes. Road-ways — streams — buildings and fields stood out so clearly. Would be so easy to hit most anything

1942 August 3. but we were flying at 1500 feet and 200 m.p.h. Wondered how things would look from 10,000 – 15,000 feet. The day was so clear, and quite warm. The passengers were

1942 August 4. a British navy medical officer — British infantry Lt., and Connell & I. Crew were a pilot — copilot — navigator & radio operator. This huge aircraft surely does ride smoothly.

259 According to personal recollections [on a Belfast forum](#), the Carlton Cafe and Restaurant was on Donegall Place from 1931 and moved to Wellington Place in 1949 (posted by "eastender" in reply #31 on 11 November 2006). At Donegall Place, it had a bakery shop, a restaurant, a balcony dining area, and a ballroom, and had another entrance on Fountain Lane (posted by "johnedin" in reply #43 on 31 October 2016). This places the Carlton one block north of Belfast city hall in 1942.

260 [RAF Sydenham](#) was adjacent the city shipyard and port in the northeast part of Belfast. See [<https://wartimeni.com/location/belfast/east/sydenham-airfield/>].

261 [Short Stirling](#), Britain's first four-engine long range heavy bomber, [manufactured at Belfast](#).

1942 August 5. Cambridge — built in a look²⁶² of the [River Cam](#), a beautiful, grassy banked stream. It is so clean — some-times stone walled, old & moss covered. The banks are lined with beautiful

1942 August 6. trees, many of them of the weeping willow type. Many boats were on the stream, filled with people young & old. The city is so restful — life moves along

1942 August 7. in a tranquil manner. Stores, streets, birds, people, seem to be clean & fresh, and quiet. Stayed at the University Arms Hotel, a splendid hostel. The centuries old colleges

1942 August 8. and churches of the city give a feeling of late middle age — just resting, looking, listen-ing — waiting for eternity. Traveled to [London](#) on Aug 28 — for a

1942 August 9. day & evening. London — huge, sprawling, bustling, not so clean, but not so gawdy as N.Y. — Very little evidence of [the blitz](#) out in the open — but in the

1942 August 10. ²⁶³

1942 August 11. ²⁶⁴

1942 August 12. back streets, and dock areas along the [Thames river](#) was devastation beyond imagination. Saw most of the historical buildings & places of the city, and traveled

1942 August 13. out thru the parks and resident-ial areas. Nice to visit London — but wouldn't care to live there. Saw no nite life — no shows, but did walk along the Thames and

1942 August 14. thru the streets during blackout. Many searchlights playing “follow the leader”²⁶⁵ thru the clouds; a remarkable scene.

1942 August 15. Back to Cambridge, and then on to [Ely](#) — and [Peterborough](#). Saracen's Head Tavern - the Cathedral, and a very good vodvil²⁶⁶ show. Sunday and a car trip across the [Midlands](#)

1942 August 16. to [Blackpool](#). Passed thru many cities associated strongly with English history. Newcastle,²⁶⁷ [Birmingham](#), [Manchester](#), and many others. Stopped at an old tavern

1942 August 17. for tea. Blackpool is quite a seashore resort. The strand is seven miles long and a couple of hundred yards deep. Towards the end of the season — but there was

1942 August 18. quite a large crowd of people on “holidays”. Spent Monday here, and really enjoyed everything. Went on to [Liverpool](#).

1942 August 19. Liverpool — A large seaport, humming with activity. Was terribly bombed early in the war, and many burned out buildings stand, giving mute testimony to the

262 Handwritten in cursive as “look”, but most likely meant to be “hook”.

263 No writing on this left-side page.

264 No writing on this right-side page.

265 Closing quotes are missing in the original handwriting.

266 vaudeville

267 Probably [Newcastle-under-Lyme](#), which is in the Midlands between Birmingham and Manchester.

1942 August 20. effectiveness of the Axis air blitzkrieg²⁶⁸. Churches, office building stores, docks, ships, all suffered heavily. Several hulks still lining the docks of the harbor.

1942 August 21. Stayed at the Adelphi hotel²⁶⁹ — a very fine place. People every-where are friendly — and everywhere we stop we meet American soldiers. Moved on north towards Scotland.

1942 August 22. Arrived in Edinboro²⁷⁰ late on a rainy nite — pitch black. Stumbled along the street looking for the Red Cross. Found it and got a nice room.

1942 August 23. The Red Cross Service Mens Club is a grand organization. Have clubs in all of the major cities of the British Isles. Clean, well managed, and very low in price.

1942 August 24. An enlisted man can get a bed and breakfast for 2' 6d (50¢), and there are some rooms for officers at 5' (1.00) The one in Edinboro is in a nice

1942 August 25. hotel on the main street — Princes St., and looks out over a beautiful park, and affords a fine view of famous old [Edinboro Castle](#). A fine monument to [Robert Louis Stevenson](#) is just across the St.

1942 August 26. Spent the entire day and nite just prowling around this very modern, clean, and hustling Scottish city — and enjoyed it immensely²⁷¹.

1942 August 27. On to [Glasgow](#) and the tail end of our trip. One & one-half hours ride across the narrow island from east to west — [North Sea](#) to [Irish Sea](#). Rained the entire distance.

1942 August 28. Glasgow. Big & dirty was our first impression. Was raining when we arrived. Checked our baggage at the pier we were to leave from, & walked uptown. Rode the train out

1942 August 29. to [Paisley](#), quite a famous milltown, weaving of fine fabrics. Toured the shops of the city — and bought a sweater for Maebelle, and books for the boys.

1942 August 30. The trip back to Belfast started at 8 PM — took all night and was uneventful, and quite smooth. Landed at 7:30 AM. Called the Bn. at²⁷² found out a truck was

1942 August 31. coming in, so spent part of the day wandering around, and some shopping. Had another good dinner at the Carlton, and arrived back at camp about midnight Sept 4.

268 blitzkrieg

269 Adelphi Hotel is on Ranelagh Street in the center of town, ½ mile north of Liverpool Cathedral and ½ mile east of the River Mersey waterfront.

270 [Edinburgh](#), capitol city of Scotland.

271 immensely

272 Written as “at” but probably meant “and”. “Bn.” is “Battalion”, meaning here the 109th Medical Battalion.

MEMO. Found the 160th Station Hosp.²⁷³ had moved in, and we were on our way out. Co A had already moved to Killadeas. The Station Hosp group were 20 officers — 30 nurses

1942 September 1. 150 enlisted men. Practically a brand new outfit — and completely lost. Glad to move out and let them take over, rather than stay with them. The nurses weren't to hot.

1942 September 2. Kept very busy the next several days — cleaning up so we could turn the hosp. over to the 160th. The camp was in excellent shape — and took many man days

1942 September 3. of labor to get it that way. Started right in getting this area at Killadeas²⁷⁴ in shape — but won't do as much work as on the last camp. However, must build a

1942 September 4. adequate parking area. This new camp is mostly British buildings, and darn poor. Company A is in American billets and very comfortable.

1942 September 5. Rumor has it that we won't be here long. Part of our Bn has been transferred to C.T. 168,²⁷⁵ Whitmore & a few enlisted men. Believe they joined Co. C. & 2d Platoon of D.

1942 September 6. Lots of rumors flying around. C.T. 168 won't be back — going to continue in England, or go to another combat zone — or who knows where?

1942 September 7. Supply business still good, and keeps me busy. Learning more & more about med. supply, and changing considerably in order to better meet requirements of med. supplies in a

1942 September 8. combat zone. Adding quite a lot of new items drugs & narcotics. Cutting out others considered obsolete.

1942 September 9. Also changing to the new T/O & T.B.A.²⁷⁶ Both cut our throats — takes 7 men from the Det.²⁷⁷ and lots of property from the Bn. Will lose more than half of our vehicles.

²⁷³ The 160th Station Hospital activated 1 June 1941 and occupied a newly completed hospital at Fort Story, Virginia. The 160th embarked in August 1942, and relieved the 109th Medical Battalion clearing company's position at Irvinestown, Northern Ireland on 19 September 1942. (See "Station Hospitals" list on the "WW2 Military Hospitals: European Theater of Operations" web page at [<https://www.med-dept.com/articles/ww2-military-hospitals-european-theater-of-operations/>] for activation date. See narrative on page 96 of *Fort Story and Cape Henry* by Fielding Lewis Tyler, 128 pages, *Images of America* series, Arcadia Publishing, 2005, ISBN 0-7385-1822-0. See embarkation note in the "United Kingdom – USANIF" section on the "5th General Hospital Unit History" web page at [<https://www.med-dept.com/unit-histories/5th-general-hospital/>]. See relief date under "Irvinestown" cantonment record at [<https://history.army.mil/reference/ireland/nistat.htm>], and relief narrative on page 19 of *The Medical Department: Medical Service in the European Theater of Operations* by Graham A. Cosmas and Albert E. Cowdrey, Center of Military History, United States Army, Washington, D. C., 1992, CMH Pub 10-23-1, available electronically at [<https://history.army.mil/html/books/010/10-23/index.html>].)

²⁷⁴ Killadeas, County Fermanagh, Northern Ireland, 6½ miles north of Enniskillen and less than 3 miles southwest of Necarne Castle (Irvine Castle).

²⁷⁵ "C.T. 168", or "Combat Team 168", is shorthand for the "168th Regimental Combat Team" (also abbreviated as "168 RCT") that would take part in Operation TORCH at Algiers in North Africa on 8 November 1942. See "Algeria–French Morocco: The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War II" brochure CMH Pub 72-11 at [<https://history.army.mil/brochures/algeria/algeria.htm>], and [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Torch].

²⁷⁶ "T.B.A" here (also "T/BA") is "Table of Basic Allowances". See [<http://www.militaryresearch.org/WhatisTOE.htm>].

²⁷⁷ probably the Headquarters Detachment of the battalion.

1942 September 10. Have tried hard to get caught up on this diary — but it is a losing proposition when you get behind. Don't remember enough events to fill the pages. Guess I should

1942 September 11. go out more — see a few gals, and have some experiences. But, always remember, there is a hereafter²⁷⁸ — and Maebelle believes in me to the extent that she is positive I'll²⁷⁹

1942 September 12. so²⁸⁰ no trifling — so I won't. Thank god she & the Boys are in a safe place, away from all of the influences of a devastating war, and won't be restricted to

1942 September 13. much on the necessities of life. And I hope they can continue to partake of some of the pleasures necessary to keep one in a cheerful & healthy mental condition

1942 September 14. Time has caught up to me at last. I'm one of those fellows who always thought there was a tomorrow. Tomorrow, 28 Nov 42 all Diaries must be turned in —

1942 September 15. and possibly I may never see this again.²⁸¹ Too much to do in too little a time — always supply work, administration of Co. duties, an effort to train the men, and many

1942 September 16. hours at night grading exam papers. Now we are on the move — 07.30 Wed morning — 25 Nov. our advance party moved out for parts unknown. I believe

1942 September 17. near Liverpool to a staging area, preparatory to a move to North Africa. Three of my men left — McCabe²⁸² Fisk & Gettier. This morning at 0730 2 officers (Auld & Mr. Johnson) and 64

1942 September 18. men moved out with all of our vehicles and most of the organization materiel. 16 men from my company — leaves me 24 to take care of a tremendous amount

1942 September 19. of work. This last group will load aboard ship and move directly to our ultimate destination. Where? Who knows. Tonight will be the last time I can write in this

1942 September 20. Diary. Many thoughts — where are we going — the voyage — dangers ahead — what comes after we arrive. Also happy thoughts of home — Maebelle

1942 September 21. and my boys. Nine letters in the past three days have sharpened my thoughts²⁸³ of them — and my folks, and many others. Kind friends I have heard from —

1942 September 22. when will I see them all again? God only knows all of the answers. Time is running short, and there are so many things I have

278 hereafter

279 Nothing follows this word in the diary entry on this calendar page.

280 Definitely written as "so", but could have possibly meant some word like "do".

281 In the 1942 June 29 diary entry block, Theo had begun a sentence with "This day is 20 November ..." Here now, we see that it is 27 November, giving a span of 8 days in which to catch up on a diary that he may never see again.

282 End of line after this word.

283 thoughts

1942 September 23. left unsaid. People I've met here I should write about — places I've been, things I have seen, so many things to write about. There is always an exhilaration²⁸⁴

1942 September 24. about going someplace, specially²⁸⁵ when the preparations are demanded suddenly & must be completed in a short time²⁸⁶ Worked most of last nite loading

1942 September 25. in the dark — and all of today cleaning up and taking in equipment which must be turned in to the various depots. Foolish, at least apparently foolish orders

1942 September 26. are given. Issue 2 pair of winter gloves — turn in all overshoes and comforts & winter caps. Issue 3 pairs of shoes — emergency rations, many other

1942 September 27. puzzling directives. Tonite I prepared my foot locker for shipment home — and wrapped my short coat. Can't take them along — so back to Maebelle they go. Will be living

1942 September 28. out of a clothing roll & bedding roll from now on — for how long? Well — it is time to move. We go to a camp — build it up by hard work till it suits us —

1942 September 29. then are moved to another area. Now this spot (Killadeas) is in quite good shape, so we will move. Quite likely from now on we will do very little repairing except on men.

1942 September 30. Roommates here in Billet #60²⁸⁷ Paulus — Minkel — Shepherd²⁸⁸. Johnson²⁸⁹ Purl — Appel & Connell — Connell left 2 weeks ago. Appel left 25 Nov. & Johnson left this A.M. (27th)

MEMO. Who leaves next — where will we meet again?²⁹⁰

284 exhilaration

285 especially

286 End of line after this word.

287 End of line after this word.

288 Probably Loyd K. Shepherd (born 1913), who in February 1941 was a first lieutenant in Company G 136th Medical Regiment. See page 230, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/230/mode/1up>].

289 End of line after this word.

290 After this question, alone on this memo page, no further writing appears on any page through the end of the diary book.

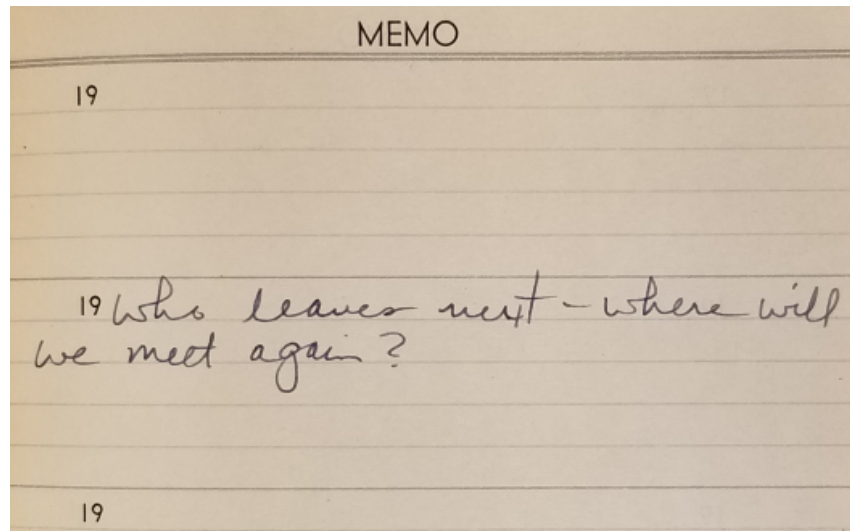


Figure 8: The last entry in Theo Murphy's diary.

Epilogue

While some of his companions were shipping out, Theo Murphy continued working in Northern Ireland through at least 27 November 1942.

A companion of Theo's, Captain Thomas E. Corcoran commanded Company C 109th Medical Battalion as that medical collecting company went ashore with the 168th Regimental Combat Team outside Algiers on 8 November 1942.²⁹¹ [Operation TORCH](#) had begun. It would run for eight days and end in success.²⁹²

The 109th Medical Battalion main body and headquarters staff landed on 3 January 1943 at [Mers el Kébir](#), a port just west of Oran on the Mediterranean coast of northwestern Algeria. On 9 January, the battalion moved from the Oran area toward the southwest to [Tlemcen](#), where the men trained and had opportunities to learn French language and local culture. While there, Edward W. Paulus was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel.²⁹³

On 1 February 1943, the 109th Medical Battalion moved out of Tlemcen and headed east to take part in the [Tunisian Campaign](#).²⁹⁴ ²⁹⁵ Company C again attached to the 168th Combat Team, and Company A attached to the 133rd Combat Team. Company B, two platoons of Company D, and the battalion Headquarters Detachment moved into an area beyond [Maktar](#), Tunisia.²⁹⁶

Company C was captured on 14 February 1943 during the [Battle of Sidi Bou Zid](#), Tunisia. Battle casualties included men named previously in Theo's diary.²⁹⁷

Captain Thomas E. Corcoran reported missing.
Captain Francis Gallo reported in Italian hands.
Staff Sergeant Ivan L. Sanders reported missing.

The 109th Medical Battalion reformed and reorganized during March 1943. The medical collecting companies continued supporting line outfits: Company A with 133rd Regiment, Company B with 135th Regiment, and a reconstituted Company C with 168th Regiment. The medical clearing company,

291 *Narrative History, 109th Medical Battalion, United States Army, North African Campaign, 8 November 1942 - 15 May 1943*, transcribed by Patrick Skelly in 2002, available at [http://www.34ida.org/history/109_med.html].

292 See also "Algeria-French Morocco", [<https://history.army.mil/html/books/072/72-11/index.html>], CMH Pub 72-11, part of *The U.S. Army Campaigns of World War II* series of pamphlets from the U.S. Army Center of Military History.

293 *Narrative History, 109th Medical Battalion*, available at [http://www.34ida.org/history/109_med.html].

294 See also "Tunisia", [<https://history.army.mil/html/books/072/72-12/index.html>], CMH Pub 72-12.

295 A detailed history appears in *Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West*, CMH Pub 6-1, U.S. Army Center of Military History, [<https://history.army.mil/html/books/006/6-1-1/index.html>] and [<https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-MTO-NWA/index.html>]. Its map "VI. Tunisian Battleground" at [<https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-MTO-NWA/maps/USA-MTO-NWA-VI.jpg>] has place names given in *Narrative History, 109th Medical Battalion*.

296 *Narrative History, 109th Medical Battalion*, available at [http://www.34ida.org/history/109_med.html].

297 *Narrative History, 109th Medical Battalion*, available at [http://www.34ida.org/history/109_med.html].

Company D, formed itself into two platoons. The battalion's roster in March included men previously appearing in Theo's diary.²⁹⁸

Lieutenant Colonel Edward W. Paulus, 109th Medical Battalion commanding officer.

Major John Parke, battalion executive officer.

Captain Alex R. Josephs, battalion adjutant.

Captain George S. Kuntz, battalion plans & training officer.

Captain Theodore E. Murphy, Headquarters Detachment commanding officer.

Warrant Officer Vernon E. Johnson, battalion transportation officer.²⁹⁹

Captain Loyd K. Shepherd, Company D commanding officer.

Captain Leo G. Severa, 1st Platoon Company D.

Captain Donald C. Deters, Company B commanding officer.

Captain Merritt A. Auld, Company B.

First Lieutenant William P. Appel, Company B.

Warrant Officer Francis A. Murphy, Company B.

Captain John R. Connell, Company C commanding officer.

First Lieutenant Elmer G. Geronson, Company C.

The 34th Infantry Division fought in the [Tunisian campaign](#) through its conclusion in May 1943, then joined the [Italian Campaign](#) at Salerno in September 1943, assaulting north to [Benevento](#), the [Volturno River](#), and Monte Pantano³⁰⁰ by mid December 1943.^{301 302}

At some point in his overseas service, Theo was injured when a German shell struck just in front of his jeep while returning from delivering medical supplies to a forward aid station.³⁰³

298 *Narrative History, 109th Medical Battalion*, available at [http://www.34ida.org/history/109_med.html].

299 Vernon E. Johnson (born 1912), who in February 1941 was a staff sergeant in Company E 136th Medical Regiment. See page 244, *Supplemental Report of the Adjutant General, Iowa, 1941: induction roster of personnel*, Iowa National Guard, published by the State of Iowa, 1944, Des Moines; [<https://archive.org/details/suppreportadjutant1941/page/244/mode/1up>]. This line in the March 1943 battalion roster also helps to identify other "Johnson" names in Theo's diary. In the 1942 January 5 entry, a "Sgt. Johnson" was "a big help" to Deters in loading vehicles onto a train. In the 1942 September 17 entry, an officer, "Mr. Johnson", left with officer Auld and "all of our vehicles". (The title of address for an army warrant officer at the time was "mister".) Finally, in the 1942 September 30 entry, Theo noted a "Johnson" being one of his roommates along with other officers of the unit.

300 Monte Pantano is a 1117 meter high mountain at geographic coordinates 41.56902, 14.02756 in the [comune of Scapoli](#), [province of Isernia](#). The mountain is about 50 miles north-northwest of Naples, 49 miles northwest of Benevento, and 74 miles east of Anzio. See the American battle history at [<https://history.army.mil/books/wwii/winterline/winter-I-right.htm>] and an Italian battle description at [http://www.camminarenellastoria.it/index/gustav_it_24_Monte_Pantano.html].

301 See the U.S. Army Center of Military History's combat chronicle of the 34th Infantry Division at [<https://history.army.mil/html/forestruc/cbtchron/cc/034id.htm>].

302 See also *Salerno to Cassino*, CMH Pub 6-3, U.S. Army Center of Military History, [<https://history.army.mil/html/books/006/6-3-1/index.html>], [<https://archive.org/details/SalernoToCassino>], [<https://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USA/USA-MTO-Salerno/USA-MTO-Salerno-Fwd.html>].

303 Biography of Theodore E. Murphy at [<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Murphy-24279>].

During his active federal service,³⁰⁴ Theo served in Company D 136th Medical Regiment, Headquarters 2d Battalion 136th Medical Regiment, Headquarters & Service Company 136th Medical Regiment, and Headquarters & Headquarters Detachment 109th Medical Battalion, all elements of the 34th Infantry Division. He returned to the United States from foreign service on 28 December 1943. Theo also served in the 47th Medical Depot Company,³⁰⁵ and at Headquarters [Fourth Army](#). He separated from the United States Army on 12 December 1945 at [Fort Sam Houston](#), Texas, after 58 months of active service.

Theo returned home to Ida Grove, where he joined the same American Legion post uncle Ray Murphy helped to start. Theo Murphy eventually became postmaster and mayor at Ida Grove, and did volunteer service in the community throughout his life. He lived 96 years, until July 1999.³⁰⁶

304 Theodore Emmett Murphy, Application to State of Iowa for World War II Service Compensation, claim number 20029, warrant number 56456, in the *Iowa, U.S., World War II Bonus Case Files, 1947-1954* [database on-line], Provo, UT, USA: Ancestry.com Operations, Inc., 2014, citing WWII Bonus Case Files, State Historical Society of Iowa, Des Moines, Iowa. [Ancestry Record 8825 #171636](#).

305 See the lineage of the 147th Medical Battalion at [<https://history.army.mil/html/forcestuc/lineages/branches/med/0147mdbn.htm>], which started as the 47th Medical Depot Company. The 47th activated in February 1944 at Camp Swift, Texas.

306 Biography of Theodore E. Murphy at [<https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Murphy-24279>].