



Connie Murphy

[Archive]: Navy Hospital Corps World War II Letters

Rhode Island, Massachusetts, North Carolina, San Francisco, Australia: 1941-1943

\$1250



An archive of 51 letters, most with original envelopes, written by Boston native Connie Murphy to his sweetheart Ruth Lacy while he was stationed with the Navy during World War II. The letters are dated between 1941 and 1943 and detail his time with the Navy from early training days in Rhode Island through his time with the Hospital Corps in Australia. All letters are very good or better with some age toning and small tears from opening.

After joining the Navy Murphy entered the Hospital Corps. Early on he tested to be part of a pharmacy program through the Navy where a cadet spent half his duty studying and working at a naval hospital and the other half at sea. In a letter dated January 27, 1941 he writes, "You know we have a test the third week we're here to see if we can qualify for a school of the subject we would like to take up while we are in the Navy. If I pass the test and I also have to compete against several hundred other fellows, I will go to Washington D.C. for 3 months, then I will go on a ship for 6 or 9 months and I can then make a request to go to the Chelsea Naval Hospital to get rated and to study pharmacy." In March of that year he writes "I'm going down to Brooklyn this Friday that's the 28th and then I'll find out if the Navy can make a doctor out of me!!" A later letter starts off "hey kid, this is Doctor Murphy speaking."

His letters to Ruth discuss his time with the Navy and his feelings towards his shipmates on the U.S.S. Constellation as well as how much he misses her. Many of his letters are signed with a "S.W.A.K." for "sealed with a kiss" or "S.M.R.L.H." which means "sailors mail, rush like hell." One letter is signed inside the envelope and reads "don't forget how happy you make me." He tells Ruth to go out with friends and enjoy life while he's away because "staying in can get the better of you" even though he admits he'll be jealous. They had a "mental date" at 7 pm every night where they both agreed they'd think of the other and imagine they were going out. "Right now it's 7:10 pm Monday and if we were together we could make this appointment very formal. You know, the way I like to." He also tells her repeatedly that all the "fellas" in his barracks think he's lucky to have "such an attractive girl." In one letter he writes, "gee kid, if wishes were granted I'd be thrown in the brig for going out with you too much down here and not studying."

Murphy also tells Ruth about his jaunts into town and his meetings with other military men. In one letter he writes, "we met some English sailors that are docked on the H.M.S. ship a short way from our hospital. They are a swell bunch of fellows and very social. They were telling me about their experiences during the war. They came here because they were torpedoed and has a 36 foot long gash which was 15 feet deep on the broadside." He ends by saying "I still think that the good old U.S. Navy is the best navy there is." By the middle of 1941 he was in the midst of his classes and writes, "we graduate today, that's what the Navy calls it, into classes on first aid, therapeutics, and nursing... this is my last day in classes of anatomy, hygiene, and weights and measurements." In March of 1942 he had transferred to a Marine medical company stationed in North Carolina and writes, "I don't know whether this is another rumor or not, honey, but we (a couple of medical companies, including company C) may leave next week for foreign duty. I'm kind of glad to hear that as there's nothing to do down here and we might as well go and try to help in this crazy war."

Murphy also dealt with death and missing comrades in his writings to Ruth. Early in 1942 he discovered a sailor who led his company at an earlier hospital was killed at Pearl Harbor and another friend had been captured in Japan. "He was a swell fellow to me, but I never had the chance to have you two meet." Later he writes, "I don't expect to be here in the States only for a matter of a couple of more weeks all told and then I don't expect to see them again until after the war is over...I really do intend to come back, Ruth. In fact I'm counting on it." He left for overseas duty from San Francisco in 1942 where his location was classified and in one instance cut out of a letter. In September of 1942 he writes from Australia, "this is a nice place where I am now. It's just like back in America. The people are real sociable. But all in all there is a few differences that make me miss Uncle Sam."

Rec'd 8. 1943
Feb

Print the complete address in plain block letters in the panel below, and your return address in the space provided. Use typewriter, dark ink, or pencil. Write plainly. Very small writing is not suitable.

No.



(CENSOR'S STAMP)

Miss Ruth Elaine Leary
65 Franklin Avenue
Chelsea
Massachusetts

C. H. Murphy Phil³/₄
(Sender's name)
U.S. M. & M. Unit 195
(Sender's address)
1/2 Postmaster
San Francisco
(Date)

Australia 1-9-42

Hello Ruth

I should say stranger. You know I haven't heard from you since the middle of November. Well, I'm just waiting for your next letter.

Well, how's everything back in the States? Are you still working at your same old job? Is Ed still in the States. I hope he is. And Edna, I suppose, is still working at the bank.

This is a nice place where I am now. It's just like back in America. The people are real sociable. But all in all, there is a few differences that make me miss Uncle Sam.

Did you have a good Christmas? I spent Xmas day @ a family over there and had a real nice time. Of course, you know it's summer down here, now, so we didn't have any snow. This so & so war makes a lot of difference in lots of things in general. I guess it must be quite a chance back home to a no pleasure riding. Well, this year will make a lot of difference in the world.

Well, Ruth I can't think of anything worth writing about, so I guess I'll close now and hope to write soon again.

Tell Mom & Edna I was asking for them.

As Ever
Con

V...-MAIL

16-0843-0

In March of 1943 he's still stationed overseas and writes to Ruth, "I am still praying for this war to end and for more reasons than I will mention!" In an undated letter from 1943 he writes, "we just got word that we could say where we are but I do want you to promise not to let it get to 1230 B. I don't want Mother to know while I'm on this island. The island is called "Guadalcanal" and is one of the small ones of the Solomon Group here in the Pacific."

While Connie was fighting the war Ruth was in Massachusetts working at a lawyer's office where at one point she writes she was earning a wage of \$30 a week. She would stay at the offices of Cabot Corporation as a legal archivist for 42 years. According to ancestry records Ruth never married. Murphy eventually was raised to the ranks of Pharmacist's Mate 2nd Class with a salary of \$93 before his letters stop.

An interesting collection of letters from a Hospital Corpsman with the Navy and later Marines to his sweetheart back home. A selection of images follows. [BTC#410893]



Third Marine Force
"B" Medical Company
New River, N.C.

Hello Darling

I got your letter yesterday, but I couldn't write to you as I moved from "C" Company to "B" Company. One of the fellows, that was up in Chelsea, is looking at your picture and he says you look like Judy Garland. Don't get swell head over it now, because I like you the way you are! I hope you are a good girl while I'm away!

Well, honey I really didn't think you did care enough to know whether I was sick or not. Honest, honey, don't think I'm a bad boy for saying that, but its just how that I am beginning to realize that you do miss me, and I think its the same by you as well as me just realizing I miss you so much.

Say,
when you
when you
sometime
honey and
and I'll
you to co
honey, hec
down. I'm
honey, and

nd of his,
lor killed
hance was
Chelsea

some time
a halfpad
kick in
I forget
you for
from
can pay
at by
of me
in
be-
us,
only
kid



Miss Ruth E. Lacy
65 FRANKLIN AVENUE
Chelsea,
Massachusetts



Would you
send a guy
the following addresses.?

Alice Faye's

Betty Grable's

Lena Turner's

Boris Karloff

Thanks a lot!

U. S.

FEB
6
1943
P.M.
NORTH
NAVY

TOD IS A BUM

TYLER WHEEL
ACRY

ISS

65

FRANKLIN

VENUE

HELSEA

HELSEA

MASSACHUSETTS

MASSACHUSETTS
RECEIVED BY MAIL
FEB 6 1943
ACRY

Thanksgiving Greeting BY WESTERN UNION



BG137 FT=TDB BROOKLINE MASS
MISS RUTH LACY=
65 FRANKLIN AVE CZ=

1941

TODAY I AM THANKFUL FOR LIFE AND FOR HEALTH BUT MOST OF ALL
FOR YOU=
CON MURPHY.

FROM Co. G. Murphy Plm 3/6
U.S. M.C. 195 1/2 P. M.
San Francisco

D. S.
DEC 18 1942
NAVY

Free

FORWARDED BY NAVAL DEPT.
IDLE GOSSIP SINKS SHIPS

Miss Ruth E. Lacy
65 Franklin Avenue
Chelsea,
Mass.

AS MANY AS THREE OF THESE TEXTS IN AN
OVERSEAS TELEGRAM via **POSTAL TELEGRAPH**

To and from members of Expeditionary Forces of the United States only

60^c
 plus 6c tax



FORM 2 EFM

Send the following message, subject to the Company's rules, regulations and rates set forth in its tariffs and on file with regulatory authorities

E.F.M. TO _____
 (RANK ABBREVIATION) (FULL NAME)

_____ (ARMY SERIAL NUMBER) _____ (APO NUMBER OR CODE EQUIVALENT) _____ (DESTINATION - LEAVE BLANK)

CHARGE ACCOUNT NUMBER	
CASH NO.	TOLLS
CHECK	
TIME FILED	(STANDARD WAR TIME)

PLEASE PRINT

TEXTS DESIRED NO. _____ NO. _____ NO. _____
 (SELECT AND INDICATE BY NUMBER) (AMOUNT IF TO BE INSERTED)

(SIGNED) _____
 (FULL NAME OF SENDER)

ADDRESS OF SENDER _____ PHONE _____

EXPEDITIONARY FORCE MESSAGE (E.F.M.) SERVICE is available between the United States and other countries to and from overseas personnel in the armed forces of the United States.

NUMBERED TEXTS APPEAR ON REVERSE

This message may be filed at any office or agency of Postal Telegraph.

GIFT WAR SAVINGS BONDS MAY BE SENT BY POSTAL TELEGRAPH FOR BIRTHDAYS, GRADUATIONS, WEDDINGS, BIRTHS, CHRISTMAS, ETC. AT SPECIAL LOW RATES: \$25 BOND, 65c — \$50 BOND, 80c — \$100 BOND, 95c, TO ANY POSTAL TELEGRAPH POINT IN U.S.A.



BACK THEM UP.
 BUY WAR SAVINGS
 BONDS AND
 STAMPS
 REGULARLY.