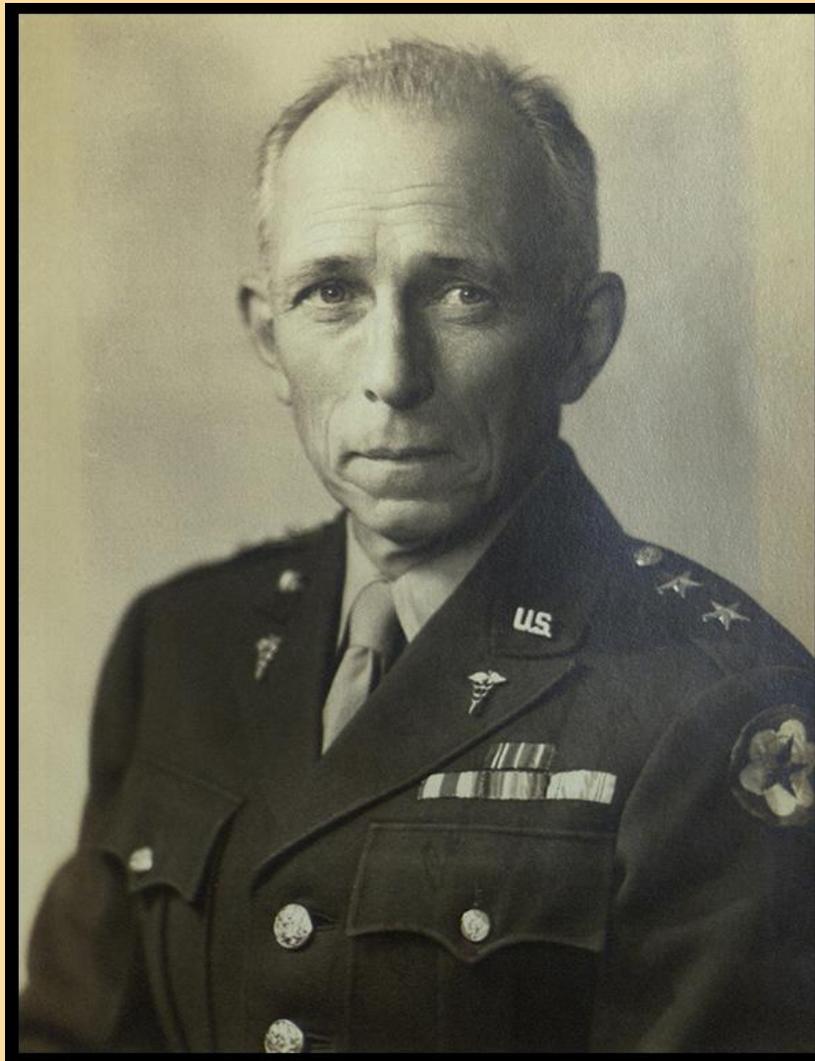




## Item of the Week *from the* Long Island Collection

LONG ISLAND COLLECTION | DIGITAL LONG ISLAND | EAST HAMPTON STAR ARCHIVE



### **Norman Thomas Kirk**

Norman Thomas Kirk (1888-1960), shown in the portrait above, may be best remembered as the namesake for [Kirk Park Beach](#) in Montauk. However, many may be surprised to learn that Kirk's work standardizing medical care is still referenced in medical journals today.

Norman Kirk was born in Rising Sun, Maryland to a farming family, but chose

to attend medical school and join the U.S. Army. He graduated from the University of Maryland in 1910, received his commission in the Medical Corps in 1912, and graduated Army Medical School in 1913. His first posting was to the Mexico-United States border, where he met nurse Anna May Duryea (sister of Perry B. Duryea Sr.) in 1916. They were married the following year.

In 1919, Dr. Kirk was stationed at both of the U.S. Army's two "amputation centers" on the East Coast, which were General Hospital No. 3 in New Jersey and Walter Reed Medical Center in Maryland, where he served as Chief of Orthopedics and Amputation from 1919-1925. Working with the wounded from World War I, Dr. Kirk recognized that there was a great deal of inconsistency in amputation techniques and outcomes and that most surgeons were unable to follow their patients' cases long term. In light of this, Kirk studied over 1,700 cases; analyzing these and the 700 surgeries he performed, to identify the best surgical practices for patients; publishing his 1924 book, *Amputations*. Norman Kirk served at U.S. Army hospitals in Michigan, San Francisco, the Philippines, Panama, and Washington, D.C., before becoming Surgeon General of the U.S. Army (1943-1947). As Surgeon General, Kirk standardized amputations, and developed early protocols for physical therapy, wound care, and even championed advances in prosthesis technology.

After 35 years of service, Major General Kirk retired, moving to Montauk in 1947, where his family had summered since 1921. In retirement, Norman Kirk indulged his love of fishing and assumed the role of village doctor, often treating fishermen without charge. General Kirk died in 1960, following surgery for an aneurysm. *The East Hampton Star* memorialized General Kirk's love of Montauk in his obituary with the quote, "This is more of a home to us than any place in the world."

## EXPLORE MORE

[The Digital Long Island Collection](#) is part of New York Heritage Digital Collections. Included are searchable scans of deeds, drawings, etchings, inventories, letters, maps, paintings, pardons, patents, photographs, plans, postcards, prints, sculptures, sketches, textiles, tiles, yearbooks and more to come.

[The East Hampton Star Archive](#) is a fully searchable, online digital archive of our local weekly newspaper, that features each complete issue of the paper from 1918-1968, exactly as it appeared in print. Visit the archive online, for a tour of our Town's history that will fascinate both the amateur and professional historian!

[The Karl Grossman Research Archive](#) is an extensive collection of materials digitized from the personal archive of Karl Grossman, an investigative reporter, columnist, author, and current professor of journalism at SUNY Old Westbury. The archive brings together a decades long career in reporting and journalism with topics ranging from the economy and pollution to fishing and East Hampton Town. Patrons are capable of searching this 9,500+ item collection by collection name, year, title, or keyword search.

[The Local Artist Research Archive](#) is a collection of over 19,000 items digitized from Guild Hall, containing materials including personal letters, photographs, news clippings, and art catalogs concerning artists of the East End. Patrons are capable of searching this archive by collection, title, or keyword search.



### **Welcome to the Long Island Collection's "Item of the Week."**

We are an archive dedicated to the history and people of Long Island, with a special interest in all things East Hampton and East End. Unlike some small local history rooms in other public libraries, we have over 100,000 items including, but not limited to, rare books, maps, photographs, deeds, postcards, letters, newspapers, and whaling logs. We also have a dedicated and hardworking staff ready to help you with any questions you may have. Unable to make it to the library? No problem! We upload images from the collection to Digital Long Island on a weekly basis, so there's always something new and interesting to behold.

Please visit us at the Library, make use of our extensive online digital resources, or contact us for assistance. Public hours are: Mon. - Tues. and Thurs. - Sat., 1:00-4:30 p.m.

### **Researched and written by Andrea Meyer, Librarian/Archivist, Long Island Collection.**

*Andrea Meyer began working in the Long Island Collection in January 2015. Her responsibilities include updating Digital Long Island, scanning, processing new collections, and assisting patrons with research. She earned her M.L.I.S. through Long Island University, and completed her M.A. in Archives and Public History at New York University through the dual-degree program. Andrea started working in archives in 2005. Prior to working for the East Hampton Library, Andrea worked at the New Jersey State Archives, at NYU Libraries, and as a private research consultant. Her clients included the New-York Historical Society. She is also involved with the Sag Harbor Historical Society.*

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