

## The Revenge of Murphy.

No one knew the immediate locality that had produced Trooper Murphy. He claimed he was a New York 'bboy' and held to the distant metropolis as if it were his native health and natural stamping ground. But such a brogue as Murphy's could never have been simply an inheritance. It had the touch of the sod in it, and his first prattlings must have been heard in the thick atmosphere of a smoky, peat saturated cabin.

Murphy had just quizzed by the regulations as to height, and certainly was not more than one or two pennyweights over the prescribed limit when placed upon the scale. But he was compactly built and a natural born cavalryman; he walked with an easy swing, and, it is legs were slightly bowed, what of that? The first sergeant said that Murphy had 'glue legs, the kind that fit to horses' ribs.'

Murphy was a favorite too. His laugh was catching. He had a merry little high-pitched voice, and dancing blue eyes, and red hair, as crisp and thick as a rock-lichen. It had had been for this heavy shock of hair, Murphy's captain said, he would never succeed in passing the examining sergeant. There was a full quarter of an inch of it. All this goes to show that Murphy was but 5 feet 4 inches, and that he weighed under 150 pounds. So much for his personal appearance. As to his age, it might have been 22, or it might have been 30; at all events, it was something between. He claimed to be 26.

Lying prone on the ground in the shade back of B troop's quarters was a group of enlisted men. The uniforms were nondescript. Some wore their canvas stable suits, loose and open. One or two were in undershirts and faded blue breeches. Some wore boots, some were in stocking feet. They had ceased cursing the weather, and were all absorbed in one discussion.

'I seed the beginning of it,' said a lanky, rather tough-looking lad who was smoking a cigarette, 'with another one stuck behind his ear, pen fashion. I seed the beginning of it. Murphy wouldn't say why, but I know it was something about the new girls at the Mayor's. The Dutchman's got a fine lip on him. It's a good thing he doesn't play the horn.'

Here another man, with a brick-red face and a long, unburned mustache, broke in. 'It was a damn good fight,' he grunted, 'but the big fellow would have killed him. The way he maul'd him was unmerciful.'

'Just like a billygoat tackling a bull,' remarked a man on the outside of the group, rolling over on his elbow. Then, as it quite pleased with his metaphor, he repeated it: 'A billygoat tackling a bull?—Schreiber made no report of it.'

'We ain't seen the end of it yet,' said the lad who first spoke. 'The little fellow'll take a lot of poundin'.'

'That's no lie,' remarked a man with a red face; 'but the ugly Dutchman could lick three of him. He's too big to put on a horse's back, anyhow.'

At this minute the dust arose again, and the horses struggled up the bank. A bugle sounded the stable call, and the group broke up. A figure in uniform just then crossed the open space that led from the barracks to the officers' quarters. The shrilling head had not taken all the spring out of this fellow; his shoulders were well back; his tunic buttoned to the throat, and he stepped briskly out like a man with a purpose before him. But if one had looked into the trooper's face he would have noticed a peculiar thing. Both his eyes were apparently shut tight, but it was not to avoid the glare of the sun. There was a slight attraction on his upper lip, another at the corner of his ear, and his jaw was badly swollen.

Lieut. Blair Carter, who was sitting on the veranda with his feet on the rail, dressed as coolly as was compatible with his usual devotion to neatness, watched the approaching figure, smiling, until it had halted at the veranda steps. The story of the fight, although unreported, had reached his ears.

'Well, Murphy,' said the Lieutenant, acknowledging lazily the salute 'how are the horses?'

'The barrier made a bad job of shoeing the crack-booted nag of Capt. Agnew's, sorr. I told him it was wasting time to monkey with it.'

'For heaven's sake, Murphy,' wiping the perspiration off his stiff upper lip with the back of his hand. 'The gray is all right again, sorr, but one of the new horses, the one with the bald spot, is going to throw a splint, I'm afraid, sorr.'

Murphy had dismissed the subject of the eyes politely but firmly.

'I'll come over and look at him this afternoon. Didn't have much luck with that last bunch, did we?'

'No, sorr; we did not.'

'Is there anything else, Murphy?'

'No, sorr.'

'That's all.'

Then Murphy, with shoulders erect, but to all appearance as blind as a bat, strode off on his little bow legs down the board walk toward the stables.

The Lieutenant picked up his paper, saw that his sister had just given a big party on board of her husband's yacht, and read over the names of the winners at the Rock-away races. Then he heard footsteps and looking up saw that a Colonel's orderly was standing where Murphy had stood but a few minutes before.

'What is it, orderly?' asked the Lieutenant.

'Colonel's compliments, sir, and he would like to see you,' the orderly replied, 'at your convenience, sir.'

'I'll be over right away.'

He stepped into his hot, stuffy little room, hid the newspaper under the pillow of his cot, looked up his jacket and hooked on his sword, and started for the Colonel's

quarters.

The Colonel sat at his desk, puffing away at a great cigar. He would blow down the smoke on the table, and it would roll off the edges, scarcely rising in the still, heated atmosphere. The room was filled with filmy, blue stars. The Colonel was a little man, with a face like an American eagle, with a heavy mustache. He had a liver, and was cognizant of it. He also had a voice that was entirely a misfit, so far as the Colonel's appearance went for it was deep and sonorous, and, at the same time sharp and clear. No one ever mistook the Colonel's orders because he could not hear them. He was very proud of that voice, and next to it was proud of the way he sat a horse. For that matter the regiment was proud of it, too, and tried to pattern itself accordingly.

'Dress parade and inspection this afternoon, Mr. Carter,' said the Colonel.

'Yes, sir I saw the orders this morning. Much cooler to day.'

'Think so, sir?'

Carter wondered if the bird, dry flesh on the Colonel's bones ever felt any change in the thermometer at all. Apparently he only perspired when he was angry and was only cold in the presence of the Major's wife, who had once offended his dignity.

'Have a chair, Mr. Carter,' went on the Colonel, looking up, and this time blowing mathematically correct smoke rings toward the ceiling. How are the horses?'

'Only a middling lot, sir; might be better.'

'Humph!' said the Colonel, 'that is your department.'

'Yes, sir.'

'I didn't say it was your fault. But see what you can make of them.'

'Did you wish to see me on something particular?' asked the Lieutenant, almost suffocating in the heat of the room.

'Oh, yes; bandmaster reports that one of his nags turned lame this morning. I want you to send up a good quiet horse in time for dress parade. Have you got one that can stand music?'

'Yes, sir; I think so. What instrument sir?'

'Bass drum, I believe.'

'Very good, sir; I will have a mount for him.'

'That's all.'

'Thanks, sir.' The Lieutenant hurried out.

The regiment prided itself very highly on its band. It was considered by all means the best in the service. The bandmaster was a German of some musical education; and he had surrounded himself with a company of good performers, the majority of them of the same nationality as himself. Col. Shepard used to brag a good deal about the band.

Lieut. Carter smiled to himself as he crossed the parade ground on his way to the stables a half hour later; he was thinking of Murphy's appearance. The bass drummer had the reputation of being something of a fighter. He was not exactly popular in the regiment, and the mental picture of little Murphy engaged in single combat with him caused the Lieutenant's smile. As he came out of the stables he was met by Murphy himself at the door of the big corral. The little Irishman was a favorite among the officers because he was polite, eager and willing, and he could ride anything that had hide and hoofs. There he was standing at attention with about as much expression on his battered, swollen countenance as one finds on a bronze image of Buddha.

'Murphy,' said Lieut. Carter, lifting one foot to the lower rail of the corral fence, 'I want your advice.'

'Yes, sorr.'

'Haven't we got a good, quiet horse that will stand music?' the Lieutenant asked.

'Sure, they all have to learn, sorr.'

'Well, the Colonel has asked me to pick out a sober, quiet mount for one of the band men. Let's see, I think it is the bass drummer.'

'The bass drummer, sorr?' Murphy's eyes opened the merest fraction of an inch.

'Yes; can't you recommend a good animal for him to ride at this evening's dress parade?'

Lieut. Carter looked full in Murphy's face and slowly winked, not once, but three times—it might have been the sunlight.

'I have just the horse, sorr.'

'Which one?'

'Well, he has no name yet that you could use in polite society, Murphy returned, 'though he has been called a great many to be sure.'

'Is he well up to weight?' the Lieutenant asked, without a quiver, adding to himself, 'Bedad, that can stay on his back.'

Well, take him over to the bandmaster this afternoon and explain what he is for.'

'Very good, sorr.'

Lieut. Carter went back to his quarters, unearthed the newspaper, strolled out on the veranda, and read on for an hour. Now he chuckled to himself. All at once the bugle rang clear and high, and some movement was detected in the direction of the barracks. Officers strolled out bucking on their side-arms, and some ladies with parasols and bright chintz dresses, left the houses and strolled over in the direction of the Colonel's quarters at the head of the parade ground, where in the evening the Colonel's wife poured tea.

The bugle blew again and with a clanking of accoutrements and the dust-raising of hoofs the troopers trotted out. It was a grown a little cooler and the shadows had lengthened, but it was not enough to make men grumble, and grumble they did as a matter of course. The line was formed. The Colonel mounted his horse, and the officers rode out before their companies, and then the band came bumping and jingling down to the front to take their position on the end of the line. It was a fortunate thing that the bass-drummer did not have to blow a horn. His great face had a slightly puffed appearance, and his lip protruded over his fine white teeth that were firmly set as he cursed beneath his breath at the horse he rode, which had a way of sidling very different from the staid, brown nag that had just been consigned to the

hospital. As the drummer passed Lieut. Carter the latter glanced at him.

The Adjutant took his position and drew his sword. 'Sound off,' he said.

Then came a few preliminary bleats of the horns and then came a boom and a crash.

It seemed as if something blew up all at once in the band, and to tell the truth it was principally the drummer. The music stopped, but the explosion continued. The black horse that had been called impolite names was asserting himself; he disliked the indignity that had been thrust upon him. That was evident from the first, but now he concluded to rid himself of the degradation. With his head between his knees, his back arched and his leg stiffened he was bucking away like the winner in a Wild West show. For a few seconds the drummer managed to hold on somehow, but no human backbone could stand it, and, with a despairing curse, the big fellow shot up into the air, landed on all fours, then sprawled face downward in the dust. But the aimless one was not satisfied. The drum was still attached to him by a leather thong, and out of the confusion he emerged like a football player, determined to make a touchdown. Eager hands snatched at his bridle, but he broke away. Down the line he came, the bass-drum playing a sonorous solo upon his flanks. When about opposite the Colonel, he concluded to make a detour to the left. The ranks parted for him. He pursued his thumping course for a few feet up the line. Then, thinking probably that he would be better appreciated where he could be seen, he charged through from rear to right and emerged again, bounding like a vicious rubber creature, intent upon planting him self into the ground, and mad that instead of being firmly imbedded he should find himself in the air again.

The whole troop was in an uproar now, but above the sounds of laughter arose the Colonel's voice.

'Catch that horse, somebody,' he roared. 'Take hold of him, one of you men.'

Maybe the nameless black heard this order, and determined to give the Colonel the first chance, for head down and tail up, whanging and banging, he charged down upon the commander of the post. Now the horse the Colonel rode was a tried veteran. He had once faced cracking rifle and had ridden up at the head of a charge against a band of screaming, shrieking hostiles, but this strange looking thing coming down upon him was too much for his nerves. He swerved, the Colonel leaned forward as if to take matters into his own hands and put a stop to the riot, but he recoiled entirely without his host. His own horse, the tried and trusted one, could stand the strain no longer. With a snort of terror he stretched out his neck and bolted. The Colonel tried to stop him. It there had been an uproar before, it was chaos now! Straight upon the heels of the Colonel's nag came the bounding, resounding mixture of drum and horse, and, worse luck, the Colonel's charger had lost its head completely. Instead of turning to the open country to the west, he made off to the eastward straight for the post laundry where some of the washwomen were gathering up the clothes that had hung all day in the bleaching sun. Into the mixtures of linen and clothes baskets the Colonel rode. A line caught him under the chin but luckily parted. The horse became frightened at the sight of one of the laundresses who was protecting herself by flourishing a red petticoat apparently at his head. He whirled and once more the Colonel emerged upon the parade ground, while behind him streamed the line of clothes. He looked for all the world like a dismantled kite. If there had been any personal danger attached to the Colonel's wild career, maybe someone might have tried to come to his assistance. As it was most of the men could hardly keep their saddles. Carter and the other officers were doubled up. The Lieutenant cast his eye back at his own company. The sight of Murphy he could never forget. Both his legs were hanging free of the stirrups and kicking wildly. He would have fallen had it not been that the troopers on either side were keeping him on the saddle.

'Hurroo, hurroo,' he was waiting at the top of his voice. Laughter was beyond him; he could only make loud and extravagant noises, noises that had never been heard before, yelps and shrieks, wild combinations, that threatened his very existence. The tears were rolling from his blackened, bruised eyes. He would catch his breath and then burst into a roar of incoherent noise—simply noise—no words, just sound.

The cause of all this turmoil had swerved out of the clothes yard back into full view again. His bucks were becoming less violent from sheer exhaustion. And now the drummer, as it to assert himself and release himself from the disgrace of having lost control of his mount—a horrible thing to happen to any cavalryman—ran out. His fine uniform was ripped up the back, his helmet was gone, but nevertheless he headed straight for the black horse, and the latter, as if perceiving that here was another victim, made straight for him. The big man made a stand of it and reached for the bridle, but the crazy animal turned quickly. The drum swung around in front of him, and, how it happened no one knew, the lashings that held it broke, and the first thing the regiment knew the drummer was disentangling himself from the broken barrel much as a clown would step from a paper ring. He picked up the debris and limped off toward his quarters. And now the Colonel having succeeded in stopping and disentangling himself from the clothes line was shouting orders. Something like attention was restored, and the line visibly shaking, was formed again. Sergt. Schreiber rode out and saluted Lieut. Carter, who, in the absence of the Captain, was in command of his company.

'May one of my men fall out, sir?' he asked. 'A bit of a snooker, I think, sir.'

Carter gave permission. He turned round and saw Murphy, too weak hardly to sit on his horse, make his way toward

the stables, his feet hanging loose from the stirrups, and his whole body wavering back and forth. Another trooper had hold of the bridle.

An orderly galloped down the line. 'Lieut. Carter, the Colonel's compliments and directs you to report to him at once.'

Carter rode up. There was not the ghost of a smile on the Colonel's hard set features.

'Mr. Carter,' he asked sternly, 'did you know that horse was a buck-jumping black devil?'

'I hadn't a suspicion, sir,' the Lieutenant responded quietly.

'Take you post, sir.'

'What was the matter with that man in your company, Carter?' asked the surgeon that evening. Several men had gathered at the Lieutenant's quarters, where their laughter could be heard across the parade ground.

'I don't know what you might call it,' Carter answered. 'But I suppose, in learned phrase, it might be described as paralysis of the ribs.'

'Colonel's compliments and he wants to see you, sir,' said an orderly at the door way.

In half an hour Carter had returned.

'What did the old man say?' questioned Jack Francis, who had the room next to Carter's own, looking up from his perusal of the baseball scores.

'Four weeks' confinement to post,' was the reply. 'A little knowledge is a dangerous thing.'

Down at the barracks Murphy had told his side of the story.

'It was me that done it, though I held no grudge agin the Colonel,' he said. 'But I'm even with the drummer, bedad. R-vinge is swate. Mary Ann'll niver look at him now.'

And she never did.

## BORN.

Lunenburg, Feb. 3, to the wife E. Colp, a son.

Belleville, Feb. 16, to the wife of R. McNeil, a son.

Granville, Feb. 15, to the wife of E. F. Miller, a son.

South Branch, Feb. 8, to the wife of Robt. Cox, a son.

Halifax, Feb. 9, to the wife of William M. Bauer, a son.

Wolville, Feb. 15, to the wife of Principal Brittain, a son.

Yarmouth, Feb. 16, to the wife of J. E. Ferguson, a daughter.

Truro, Feb. 19, to the wife of Robert Wilson, a daughter.

North Sydney, Feb. 11, to the wife of Thomas Lovell, a son.

Tupperville, Feb. 15, to the wife of John F. Stevens, a daughter.

Tupperville, Feb. 19, to the wife of Alfred Mesener, a son.

Minasville, Hants Co., Feb. 15, to the wife of Harry Mosher, a son.

French River, Jan. 31, to the wife of Wm. F. Cameron, a daughter.

Port Maitland, Feb. 19, to the wife of Oscar Tedford, a daughter.

Fredericton, Feb. 16, to the wife of Fred Powell, a daughter.

Middle St. wicks, Jan. 25, to the wife of Adam Davidson, a daughter.

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St. John, Feb. 23, William H. Belding, 76.

Tatamagouche, Feb. 9, Thomas Currie, 76.

North Sydney, Feb. 11, Llewellyn Cann 22.

North Range, Feb. 16, Katrina Comrau, 18.

St. John, Feb. 25, Captain Rufus Patterson.

Glenwood, Feb. 21, Mrs. Israel Kenney, 70.

Newport, N. S., Jan. 30, John P. Miller, 77.

Deer Island, Feb. 1, Mrs. Henry Haney, 95.

Charlottetown, Feb. 15, Oswald Horasby, 60.

East Boston, Jan. 27, Mrs. Edward Trot, 29.

Tatamagouche, Feb. 9, Thos. Currie, sr., 76.

Sydney, C. B., Feb. 15, Mary Teresa Keefe, 3.

Kemptville, Feb. 3, Mrs. John T. Gavel, 55.

Upper Brook, Feb. 18, Mrs. Wm. Prosser, 64.

Halifax, Feb. 24, Wilfred Allan Adamore, 3.

Boston, Feb. 13, Robert Brastead Lawden, 3.

Clark's Harbor, Feb. 13, Israel Nickerson, 20.

D. Ithaven, Kings, Feb. 21, Asabel Bentley, 86.

Somerville, Mass., Feb. 8, Deborah H. Toover.

Roxbury, Mass., Feb. 14, Mrs. Thos. Hasley, 78.

Campbell, Feb. 3, Jennie Ann Matthews, 62.

Loch Lomond, N. B., Feb. 12, James Brayden, 40.

St. John's, N. I., Feb. 22, Herbert Arthur Read, 4.

Upper North Sydney, Jan. 16, Jeremiah Allen, 80.

Port Morien, C. B., Feb. 4, Murdoch McMullin, 86.

Upper Hammond, Kings Co., Feb. 21, John Hunter, 74.

Halifax, Feb. 20, infant son of Edward Johnson, 3 wks.

Milton, Queens, Feb. 5, infant child of Clarke Hall, 3 mos.

Belleville, Feb. 16, infant of Mr. and Mrs. Babine 16 days.

Wolville, Feb. 19, infant son of Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Wallace, 1.

Forest Glen, Colchester, Feb. 3, Mrs. Elizabeth Sutherland, 83.

Halifax, Feb. 23, Annie infant of Mr. and Mrs. J. Mackasey, 10 mos.

Wolville, Feb. 19, Hugh, infant of Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Wallace, 1.

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