

# The Revenge Of Murphy

By JAMES BARNES.

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

Murphy had just squeezed by the regulations as to height, and certainly was not more than one or two penny-weights over the prescribed limit when placed upon the scales. But he was compactly built and a natural born cavalryman; he walked with an easy swing, and if his 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. If it had not been for this lively shock of hair, Murphy's captain said, he would have never succeeded 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, 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.

It was a "boiling hot day," which is a trite and usual description to convey the idea that the weather was uncomfortably warm. It had not rained for nearly three months. The river, that was within a few hundred yards of the northeast corner of the parade ground, had dwindled down to a narrow little stream that wiggled along through a dusty bed.

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 wore 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, in fashion. "I seed the beginning of it. Murphy wouldn't say why, but I know it was something about the new girls at the major's. The Dutchman's got a 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 good fight," he grunted, "but the big fellow would have killed him. The way he mauled him was unmerciful."

"Just like a billygoat tackling a bull," remarked a man on the outside of the group, rolling over on his elbows. Then

Agnew's, sorr. Sure I told him it was wasting time to monkey with it. "For heaven's sake, Murphy, can you see out of those eyes?" "Yes, sorr," replied Murphy, wiping the perspiration from his still 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 presently, but finally, "If some one will 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 Backway 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, my man?" asked the lieutenant.

"Colonel would like to see you, sir," 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, hooked up his jacket and looked 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 slaty, blue strata. The colonel was a little man, with a face like an American eagle, with a heavy gray mustache. He smoked a deal too much. 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.

"Dress parade and inspection this afternoon, Mr. Carter," said the colonel.

"Yes, sir; I saw the orders this morning."

"Much cooler today."

"Think so, sir?"

Carter wondered if the hard, dry flesh on the colonel's bones ever felt any changes in the thermometer at all.

"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 new horses?"

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

"Humph!" said the colonel. "That's in 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.

"Oh, yes; bandmaster reports that one of his nags turned very 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 post prided itself very highly on its mounted 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. Colonel Shepard used to brag a good deal about the band.

Lieutenant 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 Lieutenant 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?"

"Yes, sorr. Can't you recommend a good animal for him to ride at this evening's dress parade?"

Lieutenant Carter looked full into 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.

"He will carry anything, sorr," replied Murphy without a quiver, adding to himself, "begad, that can stay on his back."

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

"Very good, sorr."

Lieutenant Carter went back to his quarters, unheeded 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



Both his eyes were apparently shut tight, as if 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 a 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 beat had not taken all the spring out of this fellow. His shoulders were well back, his tonic 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 abrasion on his upper lip, another at the corner of his ear, and his jaw was badly swollen.

Lieutenant 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 touch of the finger at the hat brim, "how are the horses?"

"The farrier made a bad job of shoeing the crack hoofed nag of Captain

side arms, and some ladies with parasols and bright chins 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 pretty wife poured tea.

The bugle blew again and with a clanking of accoutrements and the dust raising of hoofs the troopers trotted out. It had grown a little cooler and the shadows had lengthened, but it was not hot 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 protruded nose, his blue-white teeth that were firmly set, as if he cursed beneath his breath at the horse he rode, which had a way of sidling very different from the steady browner nag that had just been consigned to the hospital. As the drummer passed Lieutenant Carter the latter glanced at him.

The colonel, with his piercing gray eyes looking out under his bushy eyebrows, 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 appeared 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 legs stiffened, he was looking 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 surge, the big fellow shot up into the air, landed on all fours, then sprawled face downward in the dust.

But the nameless one was not satisfied. The drum was still attached to him by a leather thong, and out of the mole he emerged like a football player, determined to make a touchdown. Eager hands had 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 a lieutenant, who to save his life could not utter a word of command, he concluded to make a detour to the left. The ranks parted for him. He pursued his bumping 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, handling like a vicious rubber creature bent on planting himself into the ground and mad that instead of being firmly infixed 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 rifles 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 reckoned 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. If there had been an uproar before, it was chaos now. Straight upon the heels of the colonel's nag came the bounding, rattling mixture of drum and horse, and, worse luck, the colonel's charger had lost his 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 mixture of linen and clothesbaskets 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 pepper 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 some one 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 endeavoring to keep him on the saddle.

"Hullo, hullo!" he was calling 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 and wild ejaculations 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 sounds.

The cause of all this turmoil had swerved out of the sloping yard back into full view again. His back was becoming less violent from sheer exhaustion. And now the drummer, as if 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 line 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, but the lashing 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 hurried off toward his quarters. And how the colonel, having succeeded in stopping and disentangling himself from the debris, was shouting orders. Something like attention was restored, and

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There are at present more buildings going up in Starkville than at any other time since its settlement. The superb courthouse which is now in course of construction will cost when completed \$30,000 and will prove a decided ornament to the city.

Starkville is also the home of the Agricultural and Mechanical college, an institution which is doing much good for the young men of the state. Too much cannot be said for the admirable way in which this college is conducted. It is a noble institution, fitting young men for practical purposes in life. Here one finds every department save only of the practical, which is so essential to the future success of the student. In the agricultural department the principles of stock breeding and feeding and the theory of drainage, together with the improvement of soil, is inculcated in the minds of the scholars. The departments of horticulture, chemistry, veterinary science, mathematics, mechanical arts and all of its other departments are conducted in that able way which demonstrates that the headmaster of each department is thoroughly conversant with his department.

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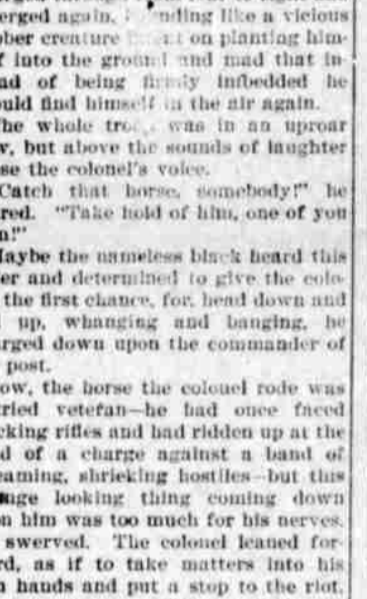
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"Take your post, sir."

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"Colonel wants to see you, sir," said an orderly at the doorway.

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 League baseball scores.

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

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I offer my services to citizens of this county to sell goods, merchandise and chattels at public vendue.

I will attend all sales at times and places specified upon receiving request to do so. Charges reasonable.

## ROSEBURG MAIL DAILY.

5:30 A.M.	Lv. Portland	Ar. 7:30 A.M.
5:20 P.M.	Ar. Roseburg	Lv. 7:30 P.M.

## DINING CARS ON OGDEN ROUTE.

### ULLMAN BUFFET SLEEPERS

See 4-Class Sleeping Cars

AT CREDIT TO ALL THROUGH TRAINS.

West Side Division.

RE. WASH. PORTLAND & OREGON VALLEY.

Mail Train Daily (Except Sunday).

7:30 A.M.	Lv. Portland	Ar. 5:50 P.M.
7:44 A.M.	Lv. Hillsboro	Ar. 4:20 P.M.
7:55 A.M.	Ar. Corvallis	Lv. 1:20 P.M.

At Albany and Corvallis connect with trains of the Oregon Pacific & Coastline Ry.

4:50 P.M.	Lv. Portland	Ar. 8:25 A.M.
6:04 P.M.	Ar. Hillsboro	Lv. 7:10 A.M.
7:20 P.M.	Ar. McMinnville	Lv. 5:50 A.M.
8:30 P.M.	Ar. Independence	Lv. 4:50 A.M.

Through sets

To all points on the Eastern states, Canada and Europe can be obtained at lowest rates from C. E. Beckwith, agent or at C. C. C. 1.

H. KOKETLEB, Manager, Portland, Ore.

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