

Timothy Murphy (sniper)

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Timothy Murphy (1751–1818) was a rifleman in the American Revolutionary War. At the Battle of Bemis Heights (Second Battle of Saratoga) on October 7, 1777, Murphy is reputed to have shot and killed Sir Francis Clerke and General Simon Fraser. Murphy's life is the subject of John Brick's 1953 novel, *The Rifleman*.

Contents

- 1 Early life
- 2 Revolutionary War
- 3 Family
- 4 Interment
- 5 Legacy
- 6 References

Early life

Relatively few details of Murphy's early life are known. He was born in the year 1751 near the Delaware Water Gap. His parents were Presbyterians from County Donegal, Ireland, who moved to Shamokin Flats (now Sunbury, Pennsylvania) in 1759, when Murphy was eight years old. A few years later, Murphy became an apprentice to a Mr. Van Campen, and moved with the van Campen family to the Wyoming Valley, which was then the frontier.^[1]

Revolutionary War

On June 29, 1775, shortly after the start of the American Revolutionary War, Timothy Murphy and his brother John enlisted in the Northumberland County Riflemen, specifically Captain John Lowdon's Company. Their unit saw action in the Siege of Boston, the Battle of Long Island, and "*skirmishing in Westchester*".^[1] After this, Murphy was promoted to the rank of sergeant in the Continental Army's 12th Pennsylvania Regiment and fought at the battles of Trenton and Princeton. Murphy was an "expert marksman", defined as being "able to hit a seven inch target at 250 yards".^[1] In July 1777, this skill led to Murphy joining Daniel Morgan's newly formed Morgan's Riflemen.

Later that year, he was selected as one of 500 handpicked riflemen to go with General Daniel Morgan to Upstate New York to help stop General John Burgoyne and the British Army. As the battles around Saratoga raged, the British, having been pushed back, were being rallied by Brigadier General Simon Fraser. Benedict Arnold rode up to General Morgan, pointed at Fraser and told Morgan the man was worth a regiment. Morgan called on Murphy and said: "*That gallant officer is General Fraser. I admire him, but it is necessary that he should die, do your duty.*" Murphy scaled a nearby tree, took careful aim at the extreme distance of 300 yards, and fired

Timothy Murphy



The Timothy Murphy Memorial Monument in Middleburgh, New York

Born	1751 <div>Pennsylvania, British America</div>
Died	1818 <div>Fultonham, New York, U.S.</div>
Occupation	Marksman
Spouse(s)	Margaret Feeck <div>Mary Robertson</div>
Children	Five sons and four daughters with Margaret Feeck <div>Four sons with Mary Robertson</div>

four times. The first shot was a close miss, the second grazed the General's horse, and with the third, Fraser tumbled from his horse, shot through the stomach. General Fraser died that night. British Senior officer Sir Francis Clerke, General Burgoyne's chief aide-de-camp, galloped onto the field with a message. Murphy's fourth shot killed him instantly. Murphy also fought at the battle of the Middle Fort in 1780.^{[1][2][3][4]}

Family

Murphy's first wife, Peggy (née Margaret Feeck), was the daughter of Johannes Feeck, a prosperous Dutch farmer in the valley. Timothy and Margaret Murphy had five sons and four daughters. Several years after the 1807 death of his first wife, Murphy married Mary Robertson, and with her relocated to Charlotteville, New York, and there by her had four more sons.^[1]

Interment

The bronze bas-relief plaque on Murphy's grave at Upper Middleburgh Cemetery, Middleburgh, New York was designed by sculptor Evelyn Beatrice Longman (1874–1954).^[5]

Legacy

Murphy is considered a hero in Schoharie County, New York where he resided. In the cemetery there, an annual walk is named in his honor.

References

- ↑ "Timothy Murphy: Frontier Rifleman" (<http://www.dmna.state.ny.us/historic/articles/murphy.htm>). New York State Military Museum and Veterans Research Center. Retrieved 2008-02-12.
- ↑ Gregory Mast; Hans Halberstadt (January 2007). *To Be a Military Sniper* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=A64US-2Em2YC&pg=PA18>). Zenith Imprint. p. 18. ISBN 978-0-7603-3002-9. Retrieved 12 July 2013.
- ↑ Alexander Rose (21 October 2008). *American Rifle: A Biography* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=bWaAiSScrRcC&pg=PT46>). New York: Random House Publishing Group. p. 46. ISBN 978-0-440-33809-3. Retrieved 12 July 2013.
- ↑ Andy Dougan (1 June 2006). *Through the Crosshairs: A History of Snipers* (<https://books.google.com/books?id=CpJ7fH7I0gkC&pg=PA47>). Da Capo Press, Incorporated. p. 47. ISBN 978-0-7867-1773-6. Retrieved 12 July 2013.
- ↑ Raymond W. Smith (June 2003). "National Register of Historic Places Registration: Upper Middleburgh Cemetery" (http://www.oprhp.state.ny.us/hpimaging/hp_view.asp?GroupView=11554). New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation. Retrieved 2010-02-20.

Retrieved from "[https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Timothy_Murphy_\(sniper\)&oldid=793915988](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Timothy_Murphy_(sniper)&oldid=793915988)"

-
- ▀ This page was last edited on 4 August 2017, at 18:43.
 - ▀ Text is available under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike License; additional terms may apply. By using this site, you agree to the Terms of Use and Privacy Policy. Wikipedia® is a registered trademark of the Wikimedia Foundation, Inc., a non-profit organization.

