

## Way We Were

November 9, 2016

### Dawn's Early Light

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Morning came early for Jim Murphy on Thursday, September 20, 1917. At daybreak, a bugler sounded reveille from the porch of his home on Rossie Hill. A cloud of nervous patriotism and foreboding gloom hung over town as daylight emerged from the nighttime darkness. By 6:30 a.m., hundreds of citizens had gathered at the Union Pacific depot to say goodbye to the twenty-five year old Murphy and fifty other young men as they departed for military training at Camp Lewis, Washington. Murphy's group was part of the second contingent of Summit County boys called to serve in World War I.

A reporter for the Park Record described the going away of sons, husbands, sweethearts, and friends, as full of pride but shrouded in real sadness and heartache. "Heart-rending indeed was the scene of fond farewells; of lingering, loving kisses; of tearful eyes; fervent embraces and a prayerful 'God Bless You,'" he wrote.

At 7:05 a.m., as the first rays of sunlight hit the camp, the train pulled away from the station amid the cheers and final goodbyes shouted by well-wishers and family members. Jim's sister, Julia, and younger brother, William, were there to see him off as he left town for one of the few times in his life.

Jim was born in Nevada on March 2, 1892 and came to Park City with his Irish parents Timothy and Mary Murphy shortly after his birth. Tim had worked at the Silver King Mine for twelve years and was much respected by a host of friends. He'd passed away on November 6, 1904 at the age of fifty-four after a two-day battle with pneumonia. Jim's forty-six year old mother died one month later of the same cause, leaving Jim orphaned at age twelve.

Jim went to live with his twenty-two year old sister Julia M. Davis after the heartbreaking deaths of their parents. Brown eyed, black haired Murphy was listed as of medium height and build when he registered for the draft on June 5, 1917. Young Jim was working as a miner with the Silver King Consolidated Mining Company when he was called for military service.

From Park City, Jim Murphy went directly to Camp Lewis. There he became a soldier in the original "Wild West" 91<sup>st</sup> Infantry Division. After ten months of intensive training, Private Murphy spent six days on a troop train that carried him to Camp Merritt, New Jersey. There the Division made ready to sail for France.

Murphy's brother-in-arms and fellow Parkite Henry Smith, whom you read about last week, was also serving in France. On October 3, 1918, just one day after Smith was slain in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, James Murphy was killed in the very same battle. Army, Private First Class, James H. Murphy, 91<sup>st</sup> Division, 348<sup>th</sup> Machine Gun Battalion, rests eternally in Plot H, Row 21, Grave 27, Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery, Romagne, France.



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Caption: Upon their safe return in 1919, surviving soldiers of the First World War paraded down Main Street to the cheers of grateful friends and family. Their brother-in-arms, James Murphy, killed in battle in France on October 3, 1918, was not one of their number.