

Statements of Two Virginia Prisoners

Office Provost Marshal.
Annapolis, Md., May 17, 1863.

The following is a statement of Margaret Cathrine Murphy: My father was a member of Co. B, 98th Ohio Vols., his name was Wm. C. Murphy; I dressed myself in men's clothes, and enlisted in the same company; the Captain of the company — Lang — enlisted me; my father was the Orderly Sergeant of the Company; in a few days after I enlisted I was detected by my laugh, and was suspicioned of being a woman; my father reported to the Captain that he had examined me, and that I was a man; I served six months in the service, and was part of the time a Corporal, I was ordered on duty, and in the meantime got drunk, and while drunk my sex was discovered; they cut my pants off, took my jacket off, dressed me in women's clothes, and put me in jail, by order of my Captain; I served in Western Virginia; was in Wheeling jail three weeks; from there I was sent to Washington; from there to the Rebel lines; after arriving at City Point I was ordered to leave the boat and go ashore; I refused, cried, and tried to jump overboard and drown myself; I was taken off by a guard that night and put in jail in Petersburg; kept there one night, and brought back to City Point under guard; I was sent to the Rebel lines on the suspicion of being a spy; never was a spy, never intended to be; love my country and the Union boys; at City Point I was confined in jail by the Rebels, and my hands tied behind my back for

cussing them; I was given up by a Rebel Captain — Thompson — to Capt. Mulford, to be taken back to the Union lines; arrived at Annapolis this morning; am sure no one in the Regiment knew of my sex, except my father, until I detected when drunk.

Statement of Mary Jane Green. — Was arrested in Braxton County Virginia, in the Eastern part of the County; the Rebels were stationed about 30 miles apart; a body of Union troops were stationed between the Rebels; I was dressed sometimes in citizen's clothes, and sometimes in women's clothes; I carried the mail from one Rebel army to the other, going through the Union lines; I was arrested in men's clothes, the mail taken away from me, and I was confined in the guard house seven weeks, then released; I told them I was a woman; they would not believe me; the day I was arrested some officer's wives were ordered to search me, which they did and made a report that I was a female; I was confined in the Guard House with men; they released me without taking the oath of allegiance, on the promise of going home and staying there; I did not stay there more than three hours, before I was off again; my home was near Suttonsville; I went to Gauley Bridge to the Rebel Army; I told them I had been taken prisoner; I dressed in women's clothes and passed the Union lines seven times before I was arrested the second time; I was arrested and taken to the Provost Guard House at Suttonsville; I escaped a day or two afterwards,

but was rearrested; they sent me to Clarksburg, and kept me five weeks; from there I was sent to Wheeling; there I was released to remain in the city on parole; remained there

about eight months; I got on the cars to go to Braxton county, and was arrested, being without a pass; I was confined in jail; was released on parole the second time; then I started for home again, having obtained a pass, and on the road I said a little too much in favor of the Rebels, and my pass was taken from me, and I was taken to a boarding house and confined there; then I went to the office, gave another name, and got a pass; I would not of done it, only some citizen prompted me to do it; then I went home, and joined the Rebel service, dressing in women's clothes, serving as a spy; they sent me to Suttonsville at six o'clock one morning for the purpose of finding out how many Union troops were there; I passed all the pickets except three; I went on a place called Ball's Point, as directed, where I could see all the troops; there were fifteen thousand Union troops there, commanded by Col. Tyler;¹ I was arrested here and taken back to Wheeling; Gen. Rosenkrans² released me; on the road home, about ten miles from Weston, I broke the telegraph wire, accompanied by about 20 guerillas; I was arrested for breaking the telegraph wire, taken to Wheeling and confined over eleven months; I was sent from Wheeling to Washington, and from Washington to the Rebel lines; my baggage was taken

from me, and I told them I would come back if they did not send my baggage; from City Point I went to Petersburg, stopped there for my dinner and went on to Richmond; stayed in Richmond over night, and then come back to Petersburg; from Petersburg I come back to City Point; I went where I pleased, not being guarded; at Petersburg I stayed at the residence of Lieut Smith, Lieut Col. Bouse took me to City Point, and had me put on the flag of truce boat, and I came back to the Union lines; I came for my baggage — trunk and bandbox; I would not have come North again if I had only had my baggage.

She states that she has serious objections to be searched as far as regards a mail, or letters upon her person. States she has no mail or letters about her, but objects to being searched.

The above was forwarded to the Provost Marshal at Washington for his information.

Francis J. Keffer,
Capt. 71st P.V. Provost Marshal.

Statements of Margaret Cathrine Murphy and Mary Jane Green, 17 May 1863, vol. 152/305 8AC, Letters Sent by the Provost Marshal, ser. 1530, Annapolis MD, Provost Marshal Field Organizations, RG 393 Pt. 4 [C-4122].

¹ Erastus B. Tyler.

² William S. Rosecrans.