

Private John W. Robison
Maury [Sparkman's] Tennessee Light Artillery

John & Josephine live near Sante Fe, Maury County, Tennessee, and they have two small children; Tommy & Sissy. The 1860 census shows John (25), Josephine (20) and a two year old son. They own no slaves and have only \$200 of personal property. John is a farm laborer.

John mustered in with the unit on October 16, 1861 near Hopkinsville, Kentucky. Late 1861 and early 1862 are spent in the Hopkinsville area.

He was captured at Fort Donelson on February 16, 1862 and sent to Camp Douglas, Illinois. After 7 months at Camp Douglas he boarded the steamer *Jno H. Done* on September 3rd and arrived in Vicksburg, Mississippi, for exchange on October 20, 1862. John was among 1,021 men shipped from Camp Douglas to Vickburg for exchange.

Records show a promotion to Corporal on October 3, 1862, but when the battery reformed John was a private.

On February 20, 1863, John writes from Port Hudson, "*Josephine . . . I have nothing strange to rite. Times is verry hard. Nothing fit to eat. Corn bread and beef and the beef is dried on foot. I never eat sutch beef before . . . Kiss the children for me.*"

On March 3, 1863, Josephine wrote, "*Wee are all well . . . John your father is going to leave us [he had to join the army as a substitute to pay off a personal debt]. I do not know what will become of me and your little children for he is all that I have to look to for assistance but I will try to do the best I can. Oh that you was with me tonight. I think sometimes that I have not got a friend on earth . . . I never ly down at night but wat I think where is my loved one tonight.*"

John was captured on July 9, 1863 at Port Hudson, Louisiana. He was paroled on July 12, 1863 and sent home to Tennessee. The Maury Light Artillery is never reformed.

We have been unable to find any postwar records regarding John and Jospphine.

- - - - -

Rory and Joey Feek, bluegrass gospel singers from Maury County, wrote and recorded '*Josephine*' based on Pvt. John Robison's letters home from Hopkinsville, Kentucky in 1861 and early 1862. If you google **Joey & Rory – Josephine** you will be able to view and listen to a WBTS video/song and also another version with the two of them on stage, with their daughter, singing the song.

(Compiled Service Records – Confederate, Brewer Library, UDC Memorial Bldg., Richmond, Virginia. Letters from *Mama, I Am Yet Still Alive*, Jeff Toalson, 2012, Bloomington, by date. 1860 census data from Ancestry.com)