

(correction: In the earlier papers I said that W. Hood enlisted in the 46th Alabama in May of 1862. This is incorrect, he was already in by January of that year although the 46th was probably reorganized in May). *disregard this earliest letter - house so far as the second one below - June 8, 1862*

(A letter to his wife, Sarah E. (Miller) Hood) from a Camp Near Vicksburg (Vicksburg) Miss
 May 6th 1862 *(I am almost positive that this date should be 1863)*
Please, read this letter then with the other Vicksburg letters
 Dear wife and Most beloved friend S _____ of the Gra _____ again with Pleasure write you a few
 lines this morning which leaves me well as to health hoping these lines may soon reach you
 and find you and our dear little Babes well + Enjoying all the Blessing of life that you Can
 In My Absinse I hav No News that would Interest you Concerning the war question But I will
 Give you a little history of the times hear (here) The Enemy I, verry Strong hear In the Miss
 River with their Gun _____ Some day Back they Come out on the Bank and attacked our Troops But our
 Boys whiped them back In quick time we Reached Vixburg on the 2nd after a long wearisome trip
 on the RR and the last day + night we had to Ride on an open Box Car In the Rain and we came ver
 Near freezing But we Met with Sum good Luck we was Marched to the Court house on the Night of
 2nd and Stayed thar 3 days + Nights while the other four regs (regiments) of our Brig (brigade)
 their line of Battle 4 miles above town and kept In the Rifle Pits 3 days
 In the Rain But we Esscaped that toil by being one day behind on the Road they May fight hear
 verry hard but I hardley think we will verry Soon our Devision (division) hav fell Back 4 miles
 from town to Camp But I dont like our location hear as the Country Is two Ritch to be healthy
 Vixburg Is a verry large town but In the Most Disgustful Place I Ever hav been at in My life
 I mutch Rather take Chances In Tenn (Tennessee) for a soldier (an old phrase which means as a
 soldier) far than hear Jackson Miss Is a beautiful town we was first ordered thar the Enemy Can
 Never get thar I (think) we can hold this Place which I think will be a verry Easy task for
 us though the yankeys heats the boys Pretty hot with booms (bombs = artillery shells) Every
 day or 2 (OVR) I will now drop the war Subject and must Say to you that I hav Not heard a word
 from you Since Capt Allen (commander of the Company) Came (from a visit home) with our Clothing
 and I am verry ancious to hear from home at this time In fact I dont know how to write to you
 untell (until) I can hear from you as I Dont know how you are getting own (on) with your
 (grocery?) Buisness Matters I am ancious to know how you are Making out for Sanlt (salt?) and
 how you are fatning your Poark (pork) Also whether you hav Not Sold your young horse you had
 better Try to Sell him Soon I will Site (?) you to me Get Pay I ow (owe) Mr Gay Sixty five
 dollars If he will Give you my Note + one hundred Dollars let him hav the horse If I could get
 home about 30 days I Could help you out In a hurry You must write to me all about those buisness
 Points Tell Leonard (a son?) to write to me I hav not Received but one letter from him Since
 last year thar will be No Chance for any ferlow (furlough) Untill this fight I Disided (decide)
 at this Place - I hop (hope) this May Deside (decide) the war I Say Give us peace whip or be
 wained one or the other Soon for this war Is a burning (a-ruining) the world as fast as time
 _____ Tell around Tell old uncle Gioser (?) + aunt Dealy Robertson I would love to Sea (see) a
 Long letter from them If they hav Not forgotten how I Mus (must) Close May God bless you and
 Protect you while we are Sourrounded (surrounded?) with this Disstressing Cause(?) Is my unble
 (humble) Pray(er) to God far well (farewell) untell I hear from you I Give my love to your
 Mother (Eliza Ray Miller) + Pap (William W. Miller) and all Enquiring friends I remain your
 true Husband and friend till death

Sarah E. Hood W.R. Hood to

(A letter to his wife, Sarah E. Hood) from a Camp Shorter Lokapoka (Loachapoka) Ala June 8th
 1862

Dear wife I Drop you a few lines this Eavinging (evening) Which liaves me In the Best of heath
 hopinge theis (these) lines may find you Enjoying the Same Blessing (blessing) from God Sara
 I hav Nothing of Importance to wright (write) to you we Can not Tell when we will leave this
 place Som Say that we hav orders to leave the 10th though I know we will not leav that Soon for
 our Colonal (colonel = regimental commander) has not Returned from Richmond (Virginia = capitol
 city)

of the Confederacy) yet + we Dont know when he wile (will) get Back + we Cannot go without he comes we hav 7 men Down with the Meassles (measles) at this Time + they Take them Every Day more or less and I hav more to Do than any man you Ever Saw as the Sick thinks I must (as top company sergeant) hav Every thing Dun for them I hav not Stopped Since I got to Camp But verry fiew minutes at a time though If my health will just hold up I Can Do as mutch for the Boys as any man as you now (know) I never Tyre (tire) I have the Seargant (surgeon) Doc to go Round among the Boys Every 2 or 3 hours + I will hav the Sick attended to So far the best I can all the officers (officers) are kind to the Sick It Is Sayed (said) When we leave we will Go to a place By the Name of Polliard one 100 Miles Below Montgomery (Alabama) at a juntson (junction) on the Pensacolia (Pensacola) R Roa(d) to keep the yankeys Back as the yankeys has the R Road at their Command at Pensacolia they May Try to Run up to Montgomery to Give us a fight at the Capitol It Is Sayd that Pollard Is a verry healthey Place our Capt Says he Rather go thare than to go to Miss If we mov (move) In 8 or 10 Days we Cannot Carry more than 40 men (there were 100 men to a company -- theoretically) as our men are at home with Meassles (and spreading it!) + heare together we onley hav at this Time about 40 men able to do Dowty (duty) I think the Sergat (surgeon) of the Regiment Is a verry plesant (pleasant) man though I wantt (want) us to get Hieflin (?)

-- letter breaks off here --

(letter to his wife, Sarah Hood) -- certainly from same location as above, Loachapoka, Alaba
June the 9th 1862

Sarah Since I commensed my letter I went to Church (in town) last Night + heard a fine Searmant (sermon) Preached whitch gave me Sum Consoaling (consoling) Consolation as I hope we hav a fiew more (men) yet that are willing to trust In God In this Troubblesom Time thar was A great Deal of fealing In the Congregation Sarah I will ___ to Reconcile my mind + Bee Submission to the will of God In every Respect I wantt you to pray for me that I may walk the life of A Christian And that I may Trust In God and Live Right pray for the Prosperity of our Army + for ow (our) grate Suckcess I hope the Time may Soon Come when we will hav peace on the Terms of Justice to Every Man (Southerners really felt that they were fighting for Constitutional rights) and my prayers to God Each Day for Our Success + that may bee a free people (Southerners felt that the more populous, industrialized North was trying to politically and economically enslave them) and a people that may worship God In his Kingdom In Spirit and In Truth (John 4:23-24) Let us pray for the Prosperity of his Mearches (churches) heare on Earth that he may let his Mearciful (merciful) hand Extend over his people In this Troublesom Time I hope the Time may com Soon when we will Sea the Case (cause) of God Glorified In every land and Contry (country) and that we may Sea this unjust war (Southerners believed that the war had been forced upon them by Abolitionists -- such as John Brown -- and the imperialist, invading Abraham Lincoln) Close Sarah Tell your pap + Mother If Thomis (Thomas Miller -- his brother-in-law -- later rode to war on Riley's mule, and killed in 1863) Does not come home to day Not to be uneasy about him I think he will come with Mr Hamlin Tom Is a little home Sick though not Mutch Since I Returned heare It will go verry hard with him to Mak (make) the Trip If Started home yet Handley Says he Shall come hom and Come Back when the oth(er) Boys comes James ___ arn + his fath(er) + mother was heare yesterday ___ Send your thrir (their) Respects (OVER -- same letter as given just before this one -- June 9th, 1862).

(letter to his wife, Sarah Hood) from Chattanooga Ten June 17th 1862 (between this date and that of the previous letter -- June 9th -- they had gone from Alabama to Tennessee)

My Dear wife I Now Seat my self to wright you a fiew (few) lines whitch leavs me In verry good health with the Exception of headach + Sour (sore) throat and I Do hope these fiew lines may find you and our lovely little children all well + Doing well Sarah I hav not Been hear lnganough (long enough) to learn Mutch yet I will first give you a little histor

(continued)

(continued -- Chattanooga June 17, 1862)

of ou (our) Trip we left Loachapoka on the 15th and got hear a little after Night on the 16th we had a verry Unpleasant Trip for when we got to West Point we was all put on and (an) old freight (freight) Train + Crowed (crowded) up with out Seats + I never Sleep (slept) a wink on the Trip we just had to hold the Reins (reins = not urinate?) + keep going No Stopped at Atlanta (Georgia) 3 hours on Sunday Night though we all landed hear Safe the Boys looks pritt wild hear for we are hear without Guns Right among the yankeys they Sliped (slipped) In hear on the 7th + 8th Boomed (bombed=shelled) this City worse (than) the Rain the Timber Is Cut up Right amoung our Tents + Sum fince (?) Buildings are Shelled all to Disstruction (destruction) + Sum fiew Beant (burnt) Down thar (are) No yankeys on this Side of the (Tennessee) River thar we No (know) of we are In Sum Danger heare unless we had Armes If we had armes I would Not ask the yankeys No Difference (handicap in fighting?) for I just Csab (?) to go on Picket (sentry duty) this Eaving (evening) we will not hav No Close Engagement hear Soon Unless the yankeys gets over the River above or bilow (below) and Tryse (tries) to Cut us off we think that Is thare (their) Motto (continual practce) we hav only about 4 Regiments hear that Is armed though we will be Strong enough to give them a fight In a fiew Days the City Is under Martial law at this Time + gards (guards) are Travlin (traveling) at all hours all Round Town and from hear to Atlanta at Every Bridge The Citizens are In Grate Confusion (OVLK) as the Me of the Southern men of this State are In the war + the Soldiers are not Cheard (cheered) hear as they ar In oather Sections of our Country (the Confederacy) though I Dont wantt you to be uneasy about me as I hav Not Been uneasy yet So fare (far) as being heart (hurt) By the Northern Rebbels I Doant think of Suct (such) thing I Dont know what I may Do In a fight I m Run lik Smoke So No more of the war at this Time

(Note midway in this letter: After winning at Shiloh in West Tennessee, April, 1862, the Union forces -- some of them -- moved eastward, down through northern Alabama, towards Chattanooga and threatened that city. This really scared the Rebs because (1) the Yanks were tough, and (2) because there was a "5th column" of pro-Union East Tennesseans (Riley's "Northern Rebel" who disliked the new Confederate government (wouldn't "cheer" the Southern soldiers). Either the 46th Alabama hadn't been "armed" yet (very common in the gun-poor agricultural South) or else they had been left behind? Anyway, the Yanks didn't take Chattanooga and the rest of East Tennessee until about a year later, September, 1863).

(continuing with the letter above) Sarah I again ask a Continued trust (interest) In your Prayer to an all wise God for to protect us and bring Safe throug this Stroug Be of Disstr for If we can Trust In God with a Prayerful hart we can Stand as a (Confederate) People I hope this may Be my (whole line wiped out at a crease in the paper) hole them I wantt you to Not be In Troubble ___ than you can help for I will Try to keep my Self In a good + faithful obedience of life + Conduct + So you Shall hav my Prayers as long as I can utter a word at the throne of Grace Let Lenard + your pap + Mother Read this letter as I Jannot wright to all to day for we are verry Buisy (busy) a setting up our Campe Sarah I Craved to Se you on Sunday when we left (Alabama) Loachapoka wors (worse) than I ever that (thought) a man boult ban(?) as it appeared to me that I was Cut of(f) from my all + all at home I feal verry lonely without any of the home Boys I must Close for this Time far well my Deare wife + Litt Children your Husband + friend W.R. Hood to Sarah L Hood

(written up side down)

I Dont hav Time to wright with a pen

(over)

(to his brother-in-law, Leonard Miller) Camp Craven (Chattanooga?) Tenn July 3rd 1862

Dear Brother I Received your kind letter yesterday witch found me well and Gave me mutch Pleasure to Read this leaves me well hoping these lines may find you and family enjoying the Same Blessings Brother I hav nothing of mutch Intrust (interest) to wright to you Times are more quiet to day than they hav been In Several days

(to same brother-in-law, in same letter -- July the 4th 1862) I will Proceede to finish my letter I hav no News of mutch Nu (new) Intrust to wright to you to day we hav an Alection (election) for Major to day and I Sea No chance for no alection yet as we hav 5 or 6 Canadates (candidates) out I hav wrote to you and Sarah yesterday (this latter letter to Sarah not yet discovered?) to Gether (gather) and Gav you all the Camp News for the present Brother I would be verry Glad to Sea you all to day If I could Spend to day with you I could unfold my Bosum (boson) to you for thar are no(body) But one more pearson (person -- Sarah?) that I can Sea more pleasure with than I can with you Lenard (obviously these two brothers-in-law were very close -- and killed the same year, probably in the same Vicksburg campaign).

(to the same brother-in-law, in the same letter -- July the 6th 1862, but now from Knoxville Tenn)

Brother After I Commenced (commenced) to wright this letter I was So buisy that I Could Not finist (finish) that day + on the 4th we ware ordered to Cook and fix to march to this place we Reach(ed) hear by march and R.R. at 2 o clock this morning and now we will Take up the line of march 23 miles Up the River this evening we ar Cooking Again this Part of the Conty (country) Is In perfect Confusion and as I hav Stated be for (before) this portion of the ar Is used as a Scouting Army all the Time and we are Now just Smeeling the Elaphant (smelling or feeling the elephant was an old phrase meaning to first experience battle) I Dont know for what pearpose (purpose) we will go up thar (extreme northeastern Tennessee mountains near the Kentucky-Virginia lines) for But to fight or Blockade one or the other we worked 7 days on the lookout mountain (Lookout Mountain near Chattanooga -- they probably worked on fortifyin it) and just lef(t) that plaise (place) and Come hear I hav Sleaf (slept) ___ 2 nights and Still walk 23 mils (miles) this Eaving I am In the best of health this morning and feelink (feeling) I Can Stand to my post I will wright again as Soon as I can Tell Sarah to not be uneasy About me I hav the Struggle will Soon be over and I will say to you my Dear Brother In ansy (answer) to your kind letter that I am not warrd about the matters as long as you are able to Sea to the honor of my wife and Children for I know you will tend to them we will send our Trunk to hear point I want you to Apply for it as Soon as you can May God bless and protect us as (is) my prayer I Remain your friend and death and my love to all friends all of our conection (connections are our distant relatives, including in-laws) as well to come In last to L.J. Thompson W.L. Hood F.L. Hood as well at this Time Lenard we direct our Trunk to you pleas apply for it as Soon as you Can and try to get Dock Pecks other things as soon as you Can just Lernt (learned) an order by tum waggon and will pay the fright (freight) hear or Send you the Money Soon yours Truly W.L. Hood To L.F. Thompson

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(to his wife, Sarah Hood) from Knoxville, Tennessee -- no date, but probably July, 1862

(top lines are missing) ___ as Soon as they can rec'd(?) all well Stout (sturdy) men these Marches the Brigade only Nos (numbers) 2 thousand (about half strength) well men at this Time and you may know how the Army far (fares) from the contents of this letter for what I wright Is facts all though I Dont ceare (care) for the wary (weary) labor If I can keep my health I can lye (lie) down at night By the Root of a Tree and just Rest 5 hours and go agai But I hope we may not hav to Stay here next winter for no men can Stand up In cold with such far (fare=food rations) as we Take hear at this Time I hope the Time may Soon come when we will be blest with Peac and harmony for I hav Sean mor Desstress (distress) among the Army than I thought I Ever would Do not be uneasy about me for I hope I will be able to Trust In God for mearcy and protection and If I can he Is able to protect me I just Ask in intrust (interest) In your Prayers at a Rich trown (throne) of Grace and I think we will meet Soon again to enjoy the fruit of my Labors (in service of country) If I fall In the field (which he did in June, 1863) I hope we will meet In a better world whar thar ar No Disstress I must Close for this Time Give my love and Respects to all our Connection and friends Tell your Father to wright To me and I will answer his letter of the 8th as Soon as I can I Recd (received) ___ kind letter of his witch was mailed with yours on the 10th Direct to Knoxville Tenn untell I Give new orders ___ Are Cooking soon to Start ___ Do not be uneasy About ___ Grecian (?) Hamlin ___ Risener ___ will and ___ (next line obliterated) ___ letters by ___

Address Sergant W.R. Hood Co E(?) 46 Reg Ala Vols
Knoxville Tenn

far well for this Time my lovely wife and little Children which ___ (next line destroyed)
___ as a good friend ___ Sarah B Hood

(to his wife, Sarah Hood) from Camp Price (near Tazewell, Tenn.?) July the 14th 1862
at sometime after July 6th his unit had gone he

Dear wife I Drop you a few lines this morning witch leaves my self John Dock and Thomas al well and Doing as well as Could be expected Dock was verry Sick yesterday though he Is well Day and Tending to the Sick giving them Pills to mix with the lime water as it Regains a mixture (?) to keep up In campse we has Several Sick me(n) In our Company at this Time we left four men In the Hospittle (hospital) at Knoxville and to Day we will hav to Send five more of all from Wiscadiga (?) will give thier Names Sharley Green J W Wilder J W Bassett Ben Fredlin George Conway and some others that ar lingering Sarah I hav no war News to wright to you at this Time as we hav got off In the mountains (on the Kentucky and Virginia state lines) whar we are not getting news only as we can heare from Knoxville I Sea no prospec for a fight hear nor In this section only about Chattanooga I think that they will fight at that Place Soon yet all though we was ordered from thar thar are about 50 thousand ordered in ther Since we left and I am not Sorry that we left thar for It Is a Sickley Place about thar I heard from thar yesterday and they war fitching (fetching) In Yankey Prisners Every day. Sarah I hav not heard from you Sice (since) I came to Tenn (a little over a mont only when the Boys came from home and It appears to me that I am cut off from communication with you though we hav Been moved about So mutch that we can not Get no letters from home I hope you and the little Children ar well and Doing (well) thought (though) I am ancious to heare from you we ar Seeing hard Times hear at this Time we had to give up our Tents and Every thing but 2 Suits of Clothing and one Blanket or quilt to the man (each man) and just lye Down on the cold Ground hear with out Bead (bed) or Blanket all most and I fear we will not keep up hear at that Rate for the nights ar verry cool and heavy Dews I have Suffered more In the last 3 nights with Toothach(e) and New Ralsey (neuralgia) than I hav In 12 month though (OVER) Better to day I find that I cannot Stand too mutch Ruff (rough) fare (food) we will Try to get our Tents again Sarah I Do not know how long I may hav to Stay In the ware (war -- he's been in the army for about two months) and I will Say to you that you may make 2 pr (pair) of jeans Pants If you can go the wool get your Pap to ___ you hav wool Rolls a Nuff to make them and I wantt one pr a Skye (sky) Blew (blue) Color and one pr a Dark Gray

(over)

(continued)

as that is the fashion (fashion) in the army (light blue or dark woolen grey trousers was regulation, but obviously the army didn't have any to issue at that time and so the men sometimes dressed as best they could) and make me 2 Shirts out of Strong Cloth and Put Linen Bosoms(?) to them as I can keep them as neat as I see any others (there will be "regulation" shirt-style) Make my pants fine and neat and you can take your Time If you can make them By the middle of Sept Tember (September) It will be as soon as I will need them (it'd be getting colder) and we will Try to make some arrangement to get them I just mention this for you to tak(e) your Time any man that has to do much buisness (as he, as company sergeant, did) is Required to keep verry neat (Riley had obvious military pride and neatness of dress) or Col (the regimental colonel) will up him quick (reprimand him) Capt Handley I promoted to Major and we will hav to alect a Lieut(enant) I Dont know yet whoo will be alected as we hav out (running) 3 very nice Canadates Dock will Run and a young man by the name of Beard and one of Samford (Samford got it) and If they all fail (of a majority) I will Try the Second Race my Self as Some(e) of the Company Say I am Entitled to the Position If I was to get the Place It would Cost me or Dock 75 or 100 Dollars to uniform our Selfs and that would (be a) verry heavy Exspense for me or Dock Either (either) I Rather Dock may get the office Sarah we had 2 Prayer meetings In Campe (revivals swept through Confederate armies, especially at a later date) In the last week witch have me nor Satisfisfaction than any thing I hav witness since I have Been In the Seavis (service) I believe thar ar sum as pure Christians In the Reg(iment) as ar any whar But they ar Tyed (tied) Down By the Col(onel) and field officers (major, Lt.col.)and anything of Religious principles are Scorned and we cant fare well while this Is the case (apparently, the higher ranking officers didn't support the religious services? Robert E. Lee and "Stonewall" Jackson certainly did) I must Close for this Time Give my love to Adaline (Sarah's sister) and Tell her (her) to be of Good cheer (cheer) and I ask you and Every other good Christian pray for our prosperity and well far (welfare)

(to his wife, Sarah Hood) -- no date or place of origin, but probably written shortly before the letter immediately above, say June or early July, 1862)

Sarah I want you to wright to me By the boys (they'd bring it from home) as they Pass for It give me grat (great) Satisfisfaction to see + read your letters Tell Dock that I hav Tried to get Handley to send him (on) a new shirt (sufficient) he sayed he would do it though he has (not) Don It ; I Cannot get it in that case Handley is a Candidate for Major (he was major in the above letter)

(to his wife, Sarah Hood -- after leaving Camp Hill, two letters above)
Camp near Powder Springs Ga Tenn July 26th 1862

Dear wife I Drop you a few lines to day witch have me well hoping these lines may find you and our little Children Enjoying the Same Rich Blessings of God Sarah your kind letters of the 8 + 14th came to hand yesterday witch have me much Satisfisfaction to hear from you though (I'm) Sorry (sorry) to hear your Disstress on the Account of Sickness and lownily ness (loneliness) I hope you may be blest with Reconciliation of mind and not give up while I am away from you I hope the Time will soon come when our Sorrough (sorrow) may be Turned Into joy and happiness and Do not be uneasy about me for I will keep my Self In a proper Stays (state?) as long as I keep well and I hav been blest with Good health all the Time Except Toothache and Pain In my head from Exposur(e) and I just Try to war (wear) that out by labor (it seems that Sgt. Hood was a very energetic, soundly healthy, and productive man) all though our Company ar all Sick Except 29 at this Time (he kept the muster rolls obviously) and ___ Can we will never get together again for we ar scattered from hear to Wesabulga Ala we ar now ___ milse (miles) North of Knoxville and we will March on Kty (Kentucky) If the yankeys dont face us on the way we ar 30 or 40 miles of Kty at this Time (Riley was part of Gen. Bragg's Confederate force which invaded Kentucky in August-Sept. of 1862 in an effort

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(continued -- July 26, 1862)

to seize that state for the Confederacy -- it was a failure) we marched on the 20th + 21 from Camp Price to this Place and I see no possibility of a fight in this Section (OVER) we Expected a fight last Monday morning at 2 o'clock and Retreated back 3 miles and Secured our Baggage wagons and Sent them back to camp and we was ordered to lay off (take off) our Knapsacks and Send them back to our camp 3 miles (preparing for an advance all these things were done to make it easier for the outfit to move) and then we advanced again on the 21st and we ar now hear at the (Powder Spring) Gap in the mountain just with what Clothing we hav on and one Blanket and dont know when we will get our Clothing again we Sent Thomas back to the camp he was as well as he has been for common (as well as usual) though not able to keep (up) and I was Glad to Send him Back John Reachan(?) and was Taken Sick on the 22nd and we had to Send him back to the hospittle 14 miles on the Knoxville Road + Do not hardly know what was the matter with him he was Taken whith (with) Somthing (something) like nervis (nervous) headact (headache) and became unvarved (unerved) and could not walke for the last 24 hours that I was with him I hope you will hear from him and heare he Is Doing well Dock Is at work In the hospittle whar all of our boys ar and they will hav the chance to wright home we left Several at the camp that was too week to march and they will hav good attention thar + come (end of paper)

Note: disease and camp sickness debilitated far more soldiers -- on both sides -- than did bullets. W.R. Hood was unusually healthy and immune.

* retching (vomiting)

(to his parents-in-law) -- no date, but probably around Powder Spring Gap, Tn. in late July, 1862 like the letter right above.

(several lines missing at top of page) _____ A going to open we hav to get up Every morning at $\frac{1}{2}$ Past 3 o'clock when we get to Rest and form the line of battle in front (front) of the (Powder Spring?) Gap our line Is About 4 miles long and If they would just come out we could hav the pretest (prettiest) Place to fight on you ever Saw (the scenery is beautiful there) as thare Is a large farm about one Milia (mile) Squar(e) Right in front of the Gap our Picket-line Extenas (extends) all Round one Side of It though as I hav Stated befor we can not Charg(e) the Gap (this letter may date from the middle of September, 1862 and be at the Federal-held Cumberland Gap -- at a later date if you figure it out) as we would be Compell to go It all most at about a double (double) file of men I could not (write) Mary other Things by Righting Camp here but I dont wish to writt any thing else what Is Religion News (not scuttle out) wright to me how you ar getting along with your mill buisness and whether you hav got your mill (stated or not) and how your crop Is for you now (know) that I like to know Sumthing about the Corn Subject as we go a long I will now give you a little Statement of the health of our Company at this Time we only Report 20 men for dewty (duty) this morning (out of a possible 100!) among Is myself + Thomas P I Hamlin Wm Rissner W T Danill (Daniel?) Wm Nelson John Smith Watson Walker John Bell W B Bell Joseph Blair from our Settlement and _____ of the 20 from Wisabulga also gall Wood (Gallwood?) W G Waldrop has the Panders we hav 37 Present (still with the outfit) but only 20 for dewty our men are Skattered (scattered) from hear back home Sum In Atlanta Sum at Knoxville and at other Hospitals Robert Walkin Is dead Capt Allen Is not able for dewty at this Time though (OVER) _____ (severals lines missin at the top) Lieut (lieutenant) with the Company though I think he Is a very Clever nice man and a man that will fight If necessary (necessary) and Die By (for) the Company Mullins has not been with us In 6 weeks and Robertson has been behind 4 weeks a man Does not know the value of good health untell he gets In camp I Rather Stay In Campe 6 month(s) than In a hospital one month I hav witnessed mor Affliction Since I hav been In Campse than any man wou think Could be Reasonable I must now Soon Close I wantt you to Pray for the wellfar (welfare) and Prosperity of our Army and our Southern Rights (he's a patriot!) that it may bee the Pleasure of an all wise God to Restore us to Peace once more on the Tearms (terms) of justice

(continued)

and Remember one that now Communicates to you for If I was Deprived of the Enjoyment of asking God for his Mercy and Protection I Should Soon Sink with Dispare (despair) Tell Sarah to not be in Trouble not Take things hart (heart) too mutch but Trust In God for he is able to Sheald (shield) and Protect hear (her) and our dear little ones from all harm and danger Give my love and Respects to Marthy (Martha) and all the children (nephews and nieces) and Receive a portion to your self far well untell I hear from you again I Remain yours Truly Till death W R Hood to W.H. (W) Miller + Eliza Miller + P S Direct your letters to Seargant W R Hood Co B 46th Reg Ala Vols Tazewell P O Tenn

Note: Riley Hood could not write so freely and naturally to his father-in-law about God and prayer if they didn't share a very sincere and personal faith in Jesus. Of course, his father-in-law, W. Miller, was the great, great, great, great-grandfather of Paul and Matt

(to his wife, Sarah Hood) Sunday Morning Aug 24th 1862 -- from the same place as the letter above (P.O. Box Tazewell, Tenn.)

Dear wife I Drop you a fiew lines In answer to you(r) kind letter you Sent to me By friend Walker thise lines leaves me well and I hope they may find you well and our dear little Children I was Truly Glad to hear from you though It was Painful to me to know how you Suffered with the Meassles (no doubt caught from all the soldiers coming and going) I hop that you ar Rested (next line too dim to read) If your self and Try mutch labor to that Coarse (course) of life wrote all the of our Statement you(r) Papa and you Can Sea If they Reach you I you every week we hav that I letter Dont get to you and you must not think I Dont wright Tell you(r) Father not to Try To Come yet unless John or dock together to (with him come for It would be uncertain about his getting to us but an (?) get to Dock and John But we ar 60 miles from them Across the mountains In A Wilderness and Martin (OVER) Mullings + Mike Devaughn got Ten miles of us thus and had to Turn Back for our Fickets will let None Pass unless the(y) hav a Transportation (pass) from A good Authority It would lift us up to Sea him If he could come Dont bee uneasy about me for I will lefor (?) a Ternpoesl(?) if life and Do the best I can I hope I Trust In God and I wantt you to Pray for me and for will for on this field of battle I will Give you a list of Names we hav In the Company for to fight If It comes off Capt Allen (company commander) Lt Samford W R Hood (third in command of Company G) Harris Elder T H Bullock Sam Price Sam Walker W P Wallross(?) W Blair Hannil Grant Hamlin T C Miller (a brother-in-law -- your great, great uncle) S Y Nelson W Wood John Cortney C Green H Warrick W Turner P W Kay W Nelson Northey Jack Strasher S Willey B D Sprachlim S I Wuist (?) (just 27 men!) Now I Close your letter to W R Hood Co B 46th Reg Ala Vols Taswell (Tazewell) P O Tenn far well you(r) lovely (loving) husband Till Death W R Hood to Sarah L. Hood

(to his wife, Sarah Hood) Camp In front of Cumbelen (Cumberland) Gap Sunday Sept the 14th 1862

(on the 9th of Sept. the 46th Alabama had marched to this very strategic pass on the Tenn.-Kentucky-Virginia line)

Most Dear beloved wife and friend I again with Grate Pleasure write you a fiew lines witch leaves me In Good health all though the worst worne out man you Ever Saw I hope These fiew lines may Reach you Soon and find you and our dear little ones well and (doing) well I will Now Give you a little history of our Travil (travel) for the last four days and Nights on the 9th at night we got orders to bee Ready to march In 1 1/2 hours we had just drawn our Rations for 3 days But did not hav It Cooked we had only 4 Buiscuts to the man Cooked + the Rest we had made In doe (dough) and we just Poaked (poked) It In our haver Sacks (haversacks) and Started about 9 o clock PM and march(ed) 12 miles In quick Time and Restead (rested) 2 hours and (then) moved on untell 9 o clock PM on the 10th (24 hour march -- with 2 hours rest!) and did not

(continued)

(continued -- Sept. 14, 1862)

Stop longanuff to Eat only one Time The object of the march was that The Enemy was Trying to Cross the mountain at Big Creek (Creek) Gap to Surround ous (us) 40 miles below This Place and our Reg and the 39th + 29th NC (North Carolina) Regs was Sent to Meet them and Drive them back we marched 35 miles In 23 hours (!) and had to Cross the Mountain In the Time whar we had to Pull up over the Rocks by the Busnes (!) the mountain was 4 miles across and then we had to March 15 miles Down the Side of the mountain along a Trail whar we Could hardly Stand up In Places and had to March In one Rank (single file) In quick Time we Struck the Big Creek Gap Road at 4 o clock In the evening of the 10th 10 miles from the Gap and Did not Meet the Enemy yet But Did not Travel the Road But a Short distance untell we Begain (began) to find Sum Singks (sinks= regularly laid out refuse pits of a Federal camp? they (the Yankees) had been In thar and found out we war (were) In Pusuit (pursuit) (OVER) of them and The Kowardly (cowardly) heathens Turned back (ran away) and blockaded the Road for 12 miles as they went (felled trees across the road, etc.) So as to Bother our Army Consequently we could not over Take Them we Persuid (pursued) them untell 9 o clock at night and had to Stop we only over hawled (overhauled) one of their Cavalry horses and Several guns and Sum blankets that (their) Rear (rear) Gard (guard) left as they had to Mak their Escape through Blockade like we had to pass through them on the morning of the 11th we Move on 5 miles and found they had Passed through the Gap and made their Escape our advance Pickets went In the Gap and we Received orders to Turn Back we then Came Back across the Mountain that day 10 miles with our feat (feet) all Blistered and no Provisions we drew 2 Rationyears (ration ears??) that Night and to the man (each) and Rested finiley (finally) and 2 more Next Morning and Started back for this Place (Cumberland Gap) on the 12th Inst (instant = day) at 3 o clock PM we Stoped (stopped) at a cormasary (commisary) Stor In this Vally (valley) Nine Miles below this Place and had just Stacked our arms (rifles) and Blankets when the Cavelry (cavalry) Pick(et) Run In after us for help they (the Federals) had Sliped (slipped) down to the Gap that we crossed at as we went down to Cut us off and we just left our Blankets and Doubled to the foot of the Mountain But they Still would not halt and fight ___ we had 3 Regs and they had the Same Number and Clum (climbed) the mountain in a head of us without any fight only a fiew Shotts (shots) was Passed between our advance Pickets and thiers we Persuid them to the Top of the mountain whar the dark Shades of the Night overtaken (overtook) Us and we war (were) thar without (NEXT PAR) Provisions or Blankets and the night (was) very dark and a verry dim trail to Travail Back down the Mountain and the Mountain (was) very Steep and Ruff we had to Clime (climb) up by the aid of the bushes and did not know how to get back we had a car with us to filate (pilot/guide) us back and Started down to the Valley 7 miles to the foot of the Mountain we then returned back to our camp to get Supper about 1 o clock we got Sum Cold water Baiscuit and stewed beef and 3 for one thought It was a heaf (better than) of any Supper I ever Lat (ate) as we had had 2 Ration years (?) In about 24 hours we then Searched that Point untell the middle of the day yesterday and found they had left and we then marched Back to this Place the most wearrried Set of men that I Ever hav Sean all though we war woun (worn) out and hungry when we war Tired and hungry when we war Called on to Meet the Enemy on the 12th the Banner (Confederate regimental flag, probably the "Stars and Bars") was unrolled and waved Its bewtiful (beautiful) Golden (they were usually white) Stairs (stars) over us as we Run to the Expected Battle field the Regiment went with (rebel) yeals (yells) and Chears (cheers) to officers and you would hav theat (thought) we ware just out of a New Camp of Instruction (boot camp) our Reg Gained Grate honor By Taking the Mach (march) as 2 others Refuis (refuse) to Go when General Stephenson (Stevenson) Gave the orders men went to meet the Enemy that I thought Could Double quick at any Rate when we Got In hearing of the Picket firing I Could hear men Say on Every hand I just as Soon dye (die) as to live and Colonal while on a halt Giv (gave) us a mild and Came (calm) address (pep talk before battle) and then Tyed (tied) his horse and head(ed) the way up the Mountain over the Rock In Silence In Pursuit of the Enemy (OVER) I dont think that we had a man In the Reg that would hav Srunk (shrunk) from therr Poost (post) (obviously, the morale of the 46th at that time was very high) I hav Now Given you a Strict account of our march and Toil the best I can under all Circumstances and will soon Close on that Subject by Saying that our Settlement Boys ar Generally (generally)

(over)

(continued)

well and was with us Thomas Joel Hood (a brother, your great, great granduncle) W Nelson W T Danil W P Risener G L Hamlin was all with us Sarah I do not write these things to Render you uneasy or Excite your Simpathys (sympathies) But I Suppose you like to hear from me and know our Travail (travel) I hope that Such Events (events) may not last long and we are just getting our hands In (just beginning to see action) If they (the Yankees) will keep us on this Side of the Mountain I can Stand it finely (fine) I want you to wright to me Concerning Sum buisness let me know what you ar doing for Sault (salt) whether you can get any or not Right (write) to me how you ar Makeing out for Meat If Suppese (suppose) your Baken (bacon) Is not out but If you can get Salt to Save you(r) Summer hog kill It when the wether (weather) Gets Cool a nuff to Save It and then advise with Lenard (and) your Pap about fatning the Rest of your hogs Try to keep up your Cows and winter them Good I hope we can Come home by the Close of the winter for I hope to Sea this war close Soon for thar Is more Distress In the land than Eaver (ever) was known Kiss our Sweet little babes + Remember them for me for I would Give all I Possess on Earth to be with you and them Let me hav your Prayers daily Give my love and Respects to all Enquiring friends fare well for this Time your True friend and Husband Till death write Soon

W.R. Hood to Sarah E. Hood

(to his wife, Sarah Hood) -- no date, but from Tazewell, Tn. (should be read with those on page #5 and 8 above) Probably enclosed with another letter

Sarah we learn this morning that we have an new (post) office and I will give you a full copp to back (put on the back of envelopes) my letters.

Searg. W.R. Hood Co.G
46th Reg Ala Vols
Taswell P O Tenn (OVER)

Give my love to Sister Antha and Lenard and Tell them To wright to me far well again your Dearest friend untell Death W.R. Hood to Sarah E. Hood

(to his wife, Sarah Hood) -- no date or place of origin (probably soon after he left home, summer of 1862?)

Sarah Tell Mr William to featch (fetch) that I want Soon + Put In the pen with that other one Be leaving with you Corn + Bacon for If we hav a Drouth (drought) this year we will be obliged to Buffer I fear Sarah Dont Let my Children Cry for me more than you can help for It apears (appears) to me that I can hear them Every day (telepathy?) I must Close So fare well for this Time your Beloved Husband W R. Hood to S.E. Hood

(to his wife, Sarah Hood) -- no date or place of origin (probably in the summer of 1862?)

Sarah I will Send you What Stampse I hav on hand and let you pay my postage and yours Too as all the officers Says we ought to not pay in advance only When we ar obliged to If you need a little Money before I Draw again just Tell your papa to let you hav It I will Send you Sum more next Time (sergeants got \$13 a month!) So I would Send you Sum now but I am a friad (afraid) to Send It By mail let your pap and Mother + Lenard all Read my letter I cannot wright to Them to day Tell your pap I will (OVER) wright to (him) Soon If you Receiv this befor the Boys Starts Send me about 20 leads of paper as I am out Tell Dock and John to Come a head and Make them Make as Soon as they Can for the Company so verry low down at this Time (it is) I hope to Sea them Soon (as Compant Sgt. he's telling them to come back to duty from brief furloughs home!) Giv my love to all Enquiring friends + the(n) Recieve the Same yourself your Tru friend and Husband untell death W R Hood to his wife Sarah E Hood. Kiss all the Children for me Dont ever let them Cry for me If you can help It

(continued)

(to his wife, Sarah Hood) -- no date or place of origin (probably the summer of 1862, enclosed as a "P.S." in another letter)

P.S. Sarah wright to me Again Soon and let me know what you hav or (are doing) with the man Allen Walker Sent you(your?) and you may keep (for) yourself if you need It If you hav Received my letter of ___ 3(rd?) It will give you Sum In Structions (instructions) I am Tiarning (training?) It though I wantt you to keep It If you need It Tell Aunt ___ Close of this month ___ satisfaction ___ Mutch to day (OVER) And let you keep Jake Till Christmas and not ___ Also Tell Jake and Mary (slaves?) howdy and Tell them I would like to Sea them I wantt you to Tell Ray to Sell that Colt and pay him Self at the Present price as I hear It Is worth from 12 to 14 (?) cts (cents) per Pound In West Point Give W A Robertson my love Tell him to send me a kind old letter your best friend till death

W R Hood to Sarah L. Hood

(a letter from his father-in-law, W.W. Miller, to W.R. Hood -- his "son" -- and a son, T.C. Miller) Mellow Valley (Alabama) Sept 18th 1862

Clay County

Dear Children (Riley and Thomas Miller) I take this opportunity to wright you a few lines to Let you know that I have heard + hearn (?) from you Several times ... from you since you left Knoxville + since (you) landed at Cumberlin (Cumberland) Gap which give me grate Sattisfaction to hear that you all was docing as well as what you ar these lines leves (leaves) me and all well at this time hoping these lines ma(y) Reach you in due time and find you both ingoying (enjoying) the Sweat (sweet) comfortes of helth + aressineation (?) of all of Gods desination(?) toward you and give you harts (hearts) to ascribe all grateness to our God for he is the Rock of our Salvation Thomas my chile (child) I have tride (tried) in my weak way to ask God to loock (look) from the gateways of his throne upon you and prepar(e) your sole (soul) for the olimes (climate=conditions) of glory my dear chile try to do as Right as you can now to you (?) my dear sun (son) Riley (apparently called this by the family) I have Recieved several letters from you and T.C. which give me a grate deal of satisfaction but I fi in one that you spoke concerning the mita (mighty) hand of God in bringing the war to a close your (you're?) busy and my neagres (negroes?) and it was (with) much satisfacton to Read ve letters and to see (you) and true that multiplide (multiplied) unto us from God the father of our Lord and savior Jesus Christ (Christ) Who saved us and call (called) us with an (an) holy calling (calling) to accordin (according) to our works (works) but according to his purpose which was with him befor(e) the werl (world) was made (this a combination of Bible verses -- which Mr. Miller know very well) and let us be ingaged (engaged) in asking him to inable (enable) us to bear some umble (humble) part in praising his grate name with the spirits of Just men made perfect by the Blood (blood) of Jesus Crist for he is worthey to Receive all prases (praises) by all for ever for it is by him that we live move and have our bene (being) and (another excellent ensemble of Bible verses -- was he a le preacher?) I hope he will spar(e) my dear Children to return hom agane (again) and find all well (both were killed around Vicksburg) (OVER, T.C. I sopose you wold (would) like to hear what wear (we're) doing in the wa(y) of making of a crop we have made a very good crop considerin(g) the dry wether and late start we had in the spring I think I will make a plenty to do us we ar not dun savin(g) fodder yet and the wether is so bad to save foder I cant tell whether we can pul(1) it all or nt (not) we have 5 Stack put up and two or 3 hanging on the stolk (stalk?) + it ran (rained) Every day + we ant (ain't) mor then (than) half don(e) yeat (yet) but in the ginol (general=mostly) thar is not mor then half cropes made in this naberhood (neighborhood) Thomas I have bean (been) atradin (a-trading) sum latey (lately) I have sole (sold) my oven and has bought a mar(e) + Colt and if you ar spard (spared) to guit (get) home agane to stay I will try to fernish (furnish) you with a good horse the nabers (neighbors) ses (say) the colt is werth (worth) mor then the filley (filly) I sole (sold) last spring Riley it tis the lin ___ we saw folowing (following) in new grown as we came

(over)

(continued)

home thar at Linches the mar(e) is aloright(?) 5 yers (years) oal (old) Thomas we want to know whither you want a blanket or not if you do want a blanket or soxes (socks) or enething (anything) you must let us know what it tis your Matison has lost 2 of his children Sarah + Nancy both deyed (died) with a tereble (terrible) bad complante (complaint) Putrifis sor(e) thort (throat) and thar has bean a grat many children dyed with that complante in this cuntry (country=section) I want you and Riley to wright me often so that we can her (hear) from you often for It tis grate satisfaction to her from you both and I hope the Lor will bles(s) you my dear children so farewell my dear children for this time Excuse my bad rightin for my paper is bad Bidda ses (says) to you + Riley to come(e) over sunday + she will make you chicken pye (pie) for diner (dinner) To T.C. Miller + Riley Hood M.H. (W.W.) Miller

(it is at this point that W.R. Hood's letter from his brother at Ft. Morgan in Alabama was dated -- November 25, 1862 -- see appropriate sheet) *see next - old sheet - after page 13*

(now, it is here that Riley's January 6, 1863 (not really 1862) should be read -- the very first one on page #1)

(at this point read W.R. Hood's letter to his wife and father-in-law, dated February 16, 1863 attached old sheet)

(now read his March 4, 1863 letter to Sarah -- both from Vicksburg) -- see attached old sheet

(to conclude we'll now consider the latest letter of W.R. Hood to his wife, from Vicksburg, dated as from Camp Near Vicksburg Miss March 9th 1863)

Dear wife I Drop you a fiew lines In answer to your kind letters whitch I Recieved By Capt Allen yesterday these lines leaves me well and hope those lines may Soon Reach you and find you well and doing well with all the little brats I hav Good News to write you at this time the health of the Co(mpany) Is verry good At this time I hav Some Buissness Points I want You to attend to at an Early Period whitch Is this I want you to Mark A. Cadoways (?) Note (from the grocery store?) Settled In full and hand It to his wife the first time you hav the chance + also Examined my Books and Settle J.L. Hoods Apct (OVER) In full to date also Mark W.G. Waldrop Note Settled in full and Send It to me By the first one that may Come to the Co as I hav Bought his watch(?) and wish to know the ammount Least(?) the Note may Get lost we drawn our pay to the first (of) Jany and will Send Sum home as Soon as I can If you hav any Money on hand Let old Mary Brooks hav It But bee Sure you credit the Note Correctly I want hear (her) Paid + I can not Say what will Bee the Ishue (issue) of Thomas(1) Case (trouble or something) yet But I hope may be (he'll) get of(f) we will know Soon as we Made the Start to day and Col Woods Sayed he would Say In (NEXT PAGE) Case to day Tell Pap not to Say to Come untell I write for him know (now) as It Is time (to) Plant Corn And I know his attention will Bee Required thar I would love to See him verry mutch But we will hav to use good omy (?) to get through this Strait (difficulty) write to me Soon and let me know what Smith has to say to my last offers I made to him (about hiring him as a Substitute) But I hav not he will Come also let me know what you dun with my mule when Lenard Started to the war Dont Sell Any Corn untell the winter Bracks (breaks) Try to Save your Cattle If you can for they air (are) valuable I am verry Glad you Sent me a nice ham of Bacon as I have not had but one half (OV) Pound from the C S (Confederate States government) Since I hav Been In Miss But we don verry well to Get Bread hear and keep fat Liet me know If any pears(on?) Is Living at the Studhar place I would love to visit my home and friends But I Dont know when I can bee Couterd(?) and I will Try to Do the Same I must now Close may (God) Bless you all and Grant us a Speedy

(continued -- March 9, 1863)

peace and we (may) Soon meet again Is my Prayer Kiss the little Babes for me for I Spend many hours In Studying about them fare well for this time I Remain your Affectionate Husband and friend till death

W.R. Hood to

Sarah H. Hood

(written upside down) My Love to you Is Not So Fall (pale) as Ink

(enclosed with the above letter)

Sarah I will write you a few Mor(e) lines as I have not Told you when I found the boys we ar about 4 miles above Town (as stated in his January 6, 1862 (3) letter!) In a verry pretty place to Camp and we hav verry Good water But It will bee a hot heat In a few days as It Is In our Country (section) In August for the Sun Shines So hot now that we had to hunt a Shade I will Send you Sum Stampe to Pay my Postage with and you will hav to Pay my Postage as I never now (know) where to Pay or what Sort of money to pay with Sarah (know you hav not got your Salt from Louina(?) Send and get It as Soon as you can I Bought Tenn (ten) lbs In west Point whitch I Paid five Dollars and It will last you a while But I want you to Salt all the (OVER) Stock Salt our hogs Sum as I think It verry Nesassary Tak the best of Cear (care) of my young horse and Dont allow any Pearson (person) to work him only to Plow and use him the Balance of the Time yourself If you hav the Chance to Send me Sum Pears (pairs) of Jeans like those Pants that I hav with me you can Send It by Wesley Devanghan and If you can you may make me a couppe of nice over Shirts of that Goods that you Speak of Sending by me to Sell and Cord the bosams (bosoms) nice But dont put your Self to mutch Trouble and bee sure to Send them by a Safe hand and Rap (wrap) them well In paper + Back them (put on the address) to me Goodby(e) again my loving wife W.R. Hood to S.H. Hood

(this is the last letter you have from W.R. Hood -- March 9, 1863 -- he was killed at Vicksburg about three months later) YOU HAVE A REAL PIECE OF HISTORY IN THESE LETTERS, PLEASE, TAKE CARE OF THEM.

The Rev. Dr. Robert O. Meir
Murfreesboro, Tn.
December 14, 1965

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LETTER FROM S.P. HOOD TO HIS BROTHERS, F.L. and W.R. HOOD -- November 25, 1862
(Fort Morgan, Mobile, Alabama)

Fort Morgan, Ala.
Nov. 25th, 1862

Dear Brothers;

I Seate (seat) My Self (myself) this Nite (night) to Drop you a fiew (few) lines in Anseer (answer) to yours Witch (which) I received last Eavning (evening). This comes to inform you that I Am Well, hoping this May find you Bouth (both) ingoying (enjoying) the Same like Blesing (blessing), Brothers.

I Shal (shall) be verring (very) Brief to Nite (tonight) Beeing (being) that my time is short. I hav (have) No Muse (news) that Will interest you. Times is verry (very) hard But I See the Best Time of any Soldier in the South. I Jest (just) hav (have) to cook and Eat all the time. I Weigh 175 lbs. and in the Best helth (health) I Ever ingoyed (enjoyed) any Whar (anywhere).

The War fever is verry (very) Cool hear (here) though I saw a letter in the paper yesterday from Penilcola (Pensacola, Fla.) that Stated that the Yankees Would attact (attack) this plase (place) in ten or fifteen Dayes But I think they Will Do like allways (always) -- Jest (just) Make A fuss (?) of it though I Would Rather they Would come on.

Brothers, the letter that I Wrote you that Was Dated Sept. 11th Was Dated rong (wrong), hit (it) Was Wrote (written) Nov. 11th But I Never thought of it till I had Mailed it And then it Was to (too) late as old Brother Joiner Says about Repentans (repentance) on the Day at Reserection (resurrection).

That fellow that Bill knocked in the head has got Back to the Co. (Company) But he looks verry (very) Bad And has but little to say, And they Did Not keep Bill in the ward house but four Dayes (days) And I Was verry (very) glad to see him relised (released) for I hav (have) not Seen four unhappier Dayes (days) since I hav (have) Ben (been) in Servis (service) for Bill is the Same thing as A Brother to Me And I Would take his part in Any place I ___ ? ___ by and Saw Bill and one of our Friends Cheat A fellow out of his Watch. Last Nite (night) We got A Man to play A ___ ? ___ With him And I give him Money to Stake him.

I Shal (shall) go up to Mobile tomorrow And I Will hav (have) A verry (very) good time at Kate Purves Own (?) a Burtens Bow (?). I hav (have) got a plenty at Money to pay My Way And I Will Write to you As Soon as I Come back.

I hav (have) Not heard from home in ten or fifteen Dayes (days) And I Shal (shall) hav (have) A host of letters to read Next Week from the girls if I Don't git (get) A Case of the Pocks (pox) But Miss Sarah Carewell Saz (says) She Can't promousk (promise) to hav (have) Me till Come back Well.

I Will Close for this time. Write Soon And often.

I remain your brother till Death;
S.P. Hood To Hood, F.L. + Hood, W.R.

(written across the top): Bill, Tell Calvary (?) And Dick I Was Gald to hear from them And Will Write to them Next Week And Give them a ful (full) history of My fun.

Vicksburg Miss Feby the 16th 1863

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Dear wife and Father I hav just Received your Kind letters of Feby the
6th whitch _____ you all once more _____
_____ was Suffering with _____
I hope and Trust these _____ am In Tolarable _____
_____ yet the Diorrhoea _____
_____ Thomas Is In verry good _____ before we Came
to _____ that you Can git Mr Smith to take My Place
In the Army for Twenty five hundred Dollars I Know I am Not able to Give any Such A Price
for A Substitute as that I will Give him My land at home and My young horse If he will
let Sarah Keep half of her wheat Crop I Dont Know what the land is worth at this time
but I t Must be worth S _____ fifteen hundred or Two thousand Dollar According to the way
every thing I Raitting (rating?) at Moneys worth If Mr Smith will take that offer just
_____ him a long when you Come after Thomas but let him Know that thar ar 3 Town lots
Sold on the Place But I Can Mak him A good Title to all the Rest of the Residence If
you Can not get him for that offer just let the thing Pass off for My land and Stuff will
bee worth Some thing In good value Some day to My little Children yet I hope and I Trust
I will Get home Sometime to live with you all I Sweet Communication Again and that befor
12 Months More Shall Pass off It would be a rate (right) Pleasure to Me to get home
Now If It was Posable for Me to git off honorable as to wish to Sell My S _____ home Place
I do not I would Not Take No less than one thousand dollars for It for the Time has
Come that Money Is worth allmost Nothing hear (here) In this Country But I Dont know
how It Is there If Pap Posably Can Come and get Thomas out of the Servis I _____ him
to do So for this Is A verry Disagreeable Country and Place for any Pearson to bee
Just make an official (?) _____ that you Never Consented for Thomas to join the Servis and
I think you Can obtain A Discharge for him It will Cost you Some (?) fifty Dollars to
make the Trip hear (here) But then Is enough _____ Thomas to Pay the Expense (expense)
of the Trip and I (think) you Can git him off _____ that will bee No obgett (objection?) and
If you Can get Mr Smith to Take My Place I will Pay a liberal Part of your expense on
the Trip Tell Sarah to Not bee Uneasy about Me as I hav wrote (written) to her to get
Me (a) Substitute for If It Cannot bee Dun (done) I Can only Stay and do the Best I
Can and hope we will Not hav to Suffer the Toils of A Soldiers life Much longer before
we hav Peace It Is (the) jonerel (general) opinion If we Sustain our Position hear (here)
that the war will Close Soon as the North hav (has) Elected a Democratic Congress and
they Meat (meet) the forth (fourth) of March If you wish you Can Read this letter to
Mr Smith and let him know from My own Pen what I am willing to do I must Close for this
Time write to Me Soon If Pap dont (doesn't) come farewell untill I hear from you
again your Husband and Son till death W.R. Hood to Sarah E. Hood J.W.M. Miller

FOURTH SURVIVING LETTER

(From Sgt. W.A. Hood to His Wife)

Camp 16th Ala Vols Vicksburg Miss March 4th 1863

Dear wife I again write you a few lines But hav Nothing that can Interest you
verry Much More than My self & Thomas are Boath In the Best of health at this Time and
I hope these lines May Soon reach you and your and the little ones all well together
with all the Con- tention (?) friends of my old Settlement I thought I would not
_____ I still I heard from home as I am looking for Pap or Capt Allen
once Every day but for _____ May become _____ though I would Give (?)
_____ Short (?) letter I also received a letter (with) the list that you and Mr
Johns and Mary Allen Robertson wrote to me In Jany and I fiare (fear) you all think
verry Strange that I Did not answer It but It came while I was at the Hospital and It was
missplaced So I did Not get It untill the 2nd of March Tell Cous (Cousin) Fanie that
I was Glad to Receive her Kind letter But verry Sorry to hear of her loss and Disstress
In Regard to the Death of Mr Johnson and I will answer her if I Can learn her P O Give
Uncle Georg Robertson and family My love and Respects and Tell them to write to me Again
Tell Marry Ellen that I often think of the Death of Jessee and feal (feel) to Moarn at
the Distress It has Braught on My Dear friends that I So dearly loved as I do Jesses
Parents Relativs the health of our Regt Is verry Good at this time as we are all Getting
Climatized to the Miss Mud and water Sarah I am verry ancious (anxious) to hear from
you and Mon Particular than I would be If we had Not Passed Some (?) letters In Regard
to you gitting Me a Substitute but I Suppose It to bee Imposable for us to Truly (?)
foram (?) and I hope that you hav Not Put yourself to too Much Trouble and Dont let It
bother your mind Any In the least If you Could get one for My home Place By giving a

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(continued)

little boot (?) I would bee willing to git off from this Buisness But It wont do to give all you hav ___ May be best for My health Is As good as It ever (was) It was In My life and I hope It will Remain good and I May Soon Come home to Sea (see) you If I dont get home to (until) ___ we hav No fight hear (here) yet but we are on the line not every day and the troops are Verry ___ (?) at this time and think we will draw Money to Morrow (tomorrow) and I hope that you may Visit us Soon You stated in your letter that old man Brookes Is dead In that station and wounts (wants) hear (his?) money and If you Can Pay that note off I would bee Glad But I wish to pay Mr Ray when I draw this time I will draw about 890 Dollars that I can Send home write to Me every week for I Crave to hear from you often If Pap Comes I can Tell him how to Proceed Times are verry heard (hard) hear (here) and It looks Imposable to feed an Army hear (here) Mutch longer farewell for this time Kiss My little ones for Me and love them freely as I know you will May God bless and Protect us Is My Prayer farewell W.R. Hood to Sarah E. Hood

Interpretation: In his February letter, W.R. Hood remarks that he and his brother, Thomas, are enjoying pretty good health -- although there was diarrhea among the troops. ~~He~~ ~~is~~ concerned to get a Substitute -- even if it means selling his "home place." Apparently, however, "Mr. Smith" doesn't care too much about going on a vacation to Vicksburg! INFLATION was crippling the currency. A Confederate Private only got \$12.00 a month, and a Sgt. not much more. He hopes that Thomas can be gotten out. Sgt. Hood has resolved himself to stay in the Service if there's no other way -- but, he hopes that the Northern "Peace Democrats" will bring an early end to the war and that holding their "position" at Vicksburg will discourage the North from further attempts at subjugating the South. Alas! It didn't work either way.

Early March 1863, W.R. Hood complains about some of the same things that concern his good friend and perhaps brother-in-law, Thomas. Hood has diarrhea, and is in the hospital. He's not feeling as good as he used to be. He's not concerned about the war. The Yankees hadn't approached Vicksburg -- but, they're looking for them. The 890 he's looking forward to getting was probably several months' pay. There is concern at Vicksburg food supplies were running seriously short. Wait 'til April, May, and June!

You're right! W.R. Hood died at Vicksburg sometime in June, 1863. His brother, Thomas, also died there. Your grandmother's records name men who were with Sgt. Hood when he died. THIS SEEMS LIKE A LOST LETTER. His military service records might clear it all up for us. At this point, we aren't sure whether he died in action or of disease. One way or the other, however, he never saw home again.