



William Rhodes, Private, Co. G, 71 OH Infantry, US

- 1832 July 25: William James Rhodes was born in Randolph County, IN to Thomas and Hannah Freeman Rhodes.
- 1841 His mother Hannah died when he was only nine-years-old.
- 1850 September 11: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in White River, Randolph County, IN showed nineteen-year-old William, a farmer, living with his father and siblings. His father was also a farmer.
- 1854 March 18: Rhodes' father, Thomas, died.
- 1861 October 23: Married Christina Birely in Mercer County, OH.
- 1862 January 27: Enlisted in the U.S. Army and mustered into Co. G, 71st Ohio Volunteer Infantry.

¹ Photo courtesy of the Rhodes family.

71st Regiment O. V.
Eds. Com:—This Regiment, located at Camp Tod, Troy, Miami Co., Ohio, is nearly full, numbering about 900. It is composed of good material, and when thoroughly drilled and equiped—as it doubtless will be—will hold a position in point of excellence second to none of the many noble regiments our State has furnished for the maintenance of the Union and the suppression of treason.
 On yesterday, at 4 o'clock P. M., I dropped in at the head quarters, where Col. R. Mason—arrived with a piece of chalk and that necessary adjunct to a well furnished school room—a black-board—instructs the company officers in the various evolutions, both company and regimental, by sketching a "bird's-

eye-view" of them on the board, accompanying it with explanations. The Colonel goes through the work as one who understands his business. This Officer's School opens each P. M., immediately after "dress parade," and continues in session about an hour. It is a good arrangement, and must result in making efficient company officers.
 Among those who have energetically worked for this regiment, Lieut. Col. C. S. Kyle stands pre-eminent, since his zeal, tact, promptness, and untiring industry, we are mainly indebted both for its organization and for its advance stage toward completion.
 Attached to the regiment is an artillery company, which is nearly full, numbering now about 125 men.
 Respectfully, &c., VERITAS.
 TROY, O., January, 1862.

Fight with Guerrillas--Seventy first Ohio Surrenders.

NASHVILLE, Aug. 21.—Yesterday noon Captian Atkinson, of the 50th Indiana, with twenty men in a stockade at Edgefield Junction, was attack by one thousand guerrillas. He repulsed them three times, killing Morgau's Adjutataut and seven privates, and wounded eighteen others, and finally, after three hour fighting, drove them off.

Col. Mason, of the 71st Ohio, the same regiment denounced by Gen. Sherman for cowardice at the battle of Shiloah, with 300 men and two cannon in strong enrenchments, at Clarksville, surrendered without resistance to the same number of guerrillas. The guerrillas were aided by rebels who had taken the oath of allegiance.

A large amount of United States property was siezed.

One hundred soldiers were captured by guerrillas at Mouskow creek, near Edgefield Junction, and the bridge burned.

Gen. Nelson left Nashville for Louisville this morning.

Lieut. Col. Hiffern, of Indiana, has been arrested for violating orders.

RUSSELVILL, KY, Aug. 21—All that is known here of the capture of Clarksville is that Col. Mason surrendered his whole command to a guerrilla force under A. R. Johnson, Woodward and Garth.

The most reliable reports represent Mason's force at two hundred and ninety and that of the rebels from four hundred to six hundred. Not a gun was fired. Mason and his men were paroled and went down the river.

Further information from Clasksville shows the surrender the most disgraceful and cowardly of the war.

The paroled prisoners were allowed to carry off their horses and side arms. The surrender was made to an inferior force of rebel cavalry.

Mason and Woodward made speeches complimenting each other.

² The Cadiz Sentinel, Cadiz, OH, Wednesday, 5 Feb 1862, pg. 3 (accessed newspapers.com)
³ Holmes County Farmer, Millersburg, OH, Thursday, 28 Aug 1862, pg. 2 (accessed newspapers.com)

The Surrender of Clarksville.
 The surrender of Clarksville, Tenn., by Colonel Rodney Mason, of the 71st Ohio, was a piece of unmitigated, disgraceful cowardice. A dispatch to the Cincinnati papers say, that further information shows the surrender to be the most disgraceful and cowardly of the war. Mason and the rebel leader Woodward made speeches complimenting each other. The Cincinnati Commercial says:

We have the bitter intelligence that Col. Rodney Mason, of the 71st Ohio Volunteers, has completed his career of cowardice by surrendering, with his whole command at Clarksville, to an inferior force of guerrillas, without firing a gun. Col. Mason's command was in an almost hopeless condition of demoralization, but that was his fault. They felt degraded by the censure bestowed upon their regiment for its conduct at Shiloh, where, as is his custom, the Colonel behaved like a poltroon, and they have been in a miserable condition ever since. If Mason had been a man, he would have rejoiced at the opportunity afforded him at Clarksville, of redeeming himself. The subject is too disgusting to dwell upon. We advise Colonel Mason to keep away from Ohio.

1864 Rhodes re-enlisted as a veteran. All men who re-enlisted were guaranteed a thirty day furlough home with their families.

THE 71ST OHIO.—The statement that this regiment had left Cincinnati for the front is an error. The 71st has been stationed at Gallatin, Tenn., for a year past, where they re-enlisted as veterans; leaving there Monday evening, 22d inst., reached Cincinnati Thursday morning, and left at once for Troy, where they will receive their furloughs. The regiment numbers about six hundred men, all but fifty of whom have re-enlisted. They are officered as follows:
 H. K. McConnell, Colonel; C. T. Riley, Quartermaster; Doctors Hoagland and Crane, Surgeons; J. H. Hart, Major; W. Nelson, Adjutant.

November 30: Rhodes was in Wood's division, Post's brigade, which upon arrival in Franklin, evacuated across the railroad bridge to Fort Granger. During the Battle Post's brigade, including the 71st Ohio was positioned along the riverbank below the town. After the battle, Wood's division was responsible for covering the U.S. Army's retreat from Franklin. When the U.S. Army was safely on the North side of the Harpeth River, they fired the bridges and by 4AM on December 1st, they followed the army on the long trek to Nashville.

⁴ Cleveland Daily Leader, Cleveland, OH, Monday 25 Aug 1862, pg. 1 (accessed newspapers.com)
⁵ Daily Ohio Statesman, Columbus, OH, Sunday, 28 Feb 1864, pg. 3 (accessed newspapers.com)

- 1865 May 22: Appointed Corporal.
- November 30: Mustered out of the U.S. Army with his company.
- 1870 July 10: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Franklin, Montgomery County, IN showed William, a farmer, living with his wife Christina and four young children.
- 1879 December 1: Rhodes applied for and received a military pension for his service during the Civil War.
- 1880 June: The U.S. Federal Census enumerated in Butler Township, Mercer County, OH showed W.J., a farmer, and Christina living with five children ages eight to seventeen.
- 1890 Rhodes was enumerated on the 1890 Veterans Schedule living in Liberty Township, Mercer County, OH.
- 1892 William Rhodes died and was buried at Swamp College Cemetery in Mercer County, OH.



March 28: Christina applied for and was awarded a widow's pension for her husband's service during the Civil War.

⁶ Rhodes, William, Swamp College Cemetery, Mercer County, OH (accessed findagrave.com)