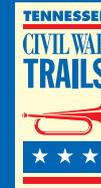


# RECAPTURE OF CLARKSVILLE



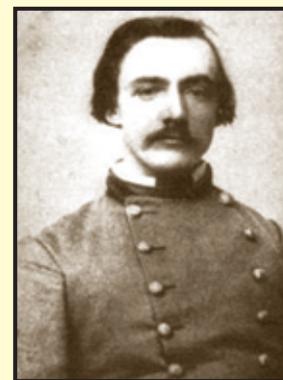
## Confederate Occupation



CivilWarTrails.org

On August 18, 1862, Union-occupied Clarksville came under attack to disrupt river traffic. The town was still very much a pro-Confederate hotbed of guerilla activity and the focus of Confederate cavalry raids. Confederate Col. Thomas Woodward rode at the head of two combined forces: Col. Adam R. “Stovepipe” Johnson’s partisans and the Oak Grove Rangers, a veteran Kentucky and Tennessee cavalry command bolstered with new recruits.

The Confederates crossed the bridge over Red River on the Hopkinsville Road and headed toward the Federal base at Stewart College (now Austin Peay State University). Johnson’s column searched for Union commander Col. Rodney Mason downtown while Woodward swept toward the college. Mason hurried to the campus when he learned of the attack, but his three hundred soldiers of the 71st Ohio Infantry were scattered. Some were on the river guarding supplies, others were stationed at the two railroad bridges, and some patrolled telegraph lines.



Col. Adam R. “Stovepipe” Johnson  
Courtesy ????



Col. Thomas Woodward  
Courtesy ????

Mason at first rebuffed the Confederate surrender demand, but soon had second thoughts. Many residents had joined the Confederates, whose strength was reported at 800 but probably consisted of half that number. Mason also assumed he faced two Confederate artillery pieces, but



Col. Rodney Mason – Courtesy  
Howard Winn

they were clever fakes produced by Johnson’s partisans and thereby accounting for his nickname, “Stovepipe.” Taking his precarious position into consideration, Mason struck his colors. The 71st Ohio was paroled and sent to Paducah.

The Confederates rested and planned further operations in the Clarksville vicinity. Soon after, on August 25, Woodward attacked a detachment of the 71st Ohio at Dover, but was repulsed, and he fell back to Clarksville.

