

Elihu Harlam Mason



Born	March 23, 1831 Richmond, Indiana
Died	September 24, 1896 (aged 65) Pemberville, Ohio
Place of burial	Pemberville Cemetery, Pemberville, Ohio
Allegiance	 United States of America Union
Service/branch	 United States Army Union Army
Years of service	1861 - 1865
Rank	 Captain
Unit	 21st Ohio Infantry
Battles/wars	American Civil War • Great Locomotive Chase
Awards	Medal of Honor

Elihu Harlam Mason (March 23, 1831 – September 24, 1896) was a Union Army soldier in the American Civil War and a recipient of the United States military's

highest decoration, the Medal of Honor, for his actions in the Great Locomotive Chase.

Five feet 10 inches tall, light complexion, blonde hair, blue eyes; 31 years, 19 days of age on day of the Raid. He was a farmer and married to Nancy L. Kelley, who was from Wausau Indiana.

Mason joined the Army from Pemberville, Ohio in April 1861, and by April 1862 was serving as a sergeant in Company K of the 21st Ohio Infantry. During that month, he volunteered for a raid into Confederate territory to disrupt rail transport in Georgia. The mission failed, and all of the raiders were captured. Mason was captured at Bridgeport, Alabama. In June, eight of the men, including the raid leader, James J. Andrews, were executed as spies. The remaining raiders, including Mason, made an escape from the Confederate prison on October 16, 1862. Very ill at the time, Mason was unable to keep up with the other soldiers and, at his own urging, was eventually left behind and recaptured by the Confederates. He and five other recaptured raiders were released in a prisoner exchange the next year, on March 18.

For his actions during the mission, he was awarded the newly created Medal of Honor one week after being exchanged, on March 25, 1863. He was the fourth person ever to receive the medal.

Discharged for promotion 1st Lieutenant Co. L 21st Ohio Infantry Regiment, April 10, 1863. Promoted Captain Co. L 21st Ohio Infantry Regiment, December 30, 1864. He fought at the Battle of Dug Gap, GA on September 11, 1863 and the Battle of Chickamauga where he was again captured by the Confederates on September 20, 1863 with a gunshot wound to the hip. He was paroled on December

13, 1864 from Charleston, South Carolina, and discharged in May 1865.

After the war, Mason returned to Pemberville, Ohio. He died of cancer at age 65 and was buried at Pemberville Cemetery.

Citation

One of the 19 of 22 men (including 2 civilians) who, by direction of Gen. Mitchell (or Buell), penetrated nearly 200 miles south into enemy territory and captured a railroad train at Big Shanty, Ga., in an attempt to destroy the bridges and track between Chattanooga and Atlanta.