

## **The Price in Blood! Casualties in the Civil War**

At least 618,000 Americans died in the Civil War, and some experts say the toll reached 700,000. The number that is most often quoted is 620,000. At any rate, these casualties exceed the nation's loss in all its other wars, from the Revolution through Vietnam. The Union armies had from 2,500,000 to 2,750,000 men. Their losses, by the best estimates:

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| Battle deaths: | 110,070 |
| Disease, etc.: | 250,152 |
| Total          | 360,222 |

The Confederate strength, known less accurately because of missing records, was from 750,000 to 1,250,000. Its estimated losses:

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| Battle deaths: | 94,000  |
| Disease, etc.: | 164,000 |
| Total          | 258,000 |

The leading authority on casualties of the war, Thomas L. Livermore, admitting the handicap of poor records in some cases, studied 48 of the war's battles and concluded: Of every 1,000 Federals in battle, 112 were wounded. Of every 1,000 Confederates, 150 were hit. Mortality was greater among Confederate wounded, because of inferior medical service. The great battles, in terms of their toll in dead, wounded, and missing is listed on this site:

## **The Ten Costliest Battles of the Civil War.**

Some of the great blood baths of the war came as Grant drove on Richmond in the spring of 1864- Confederate casualties are missing for this campaign, but were enormous. The Federal toll:

|                              |        |
|------------------------------|--------|
| The Wilderness, May 5-7:     | 17,666 |
| Spotsylvania, May 10 and 12: | 10,920 |
| Drewry's Bluff, May 12-16    | 4,160  |
| Cold Harbor, June 1-3:       | 12,000 |
| Petersburg, June 15-30       | 16,569 |

These total 61,315, with rolls of the missing incomplete.

The Appomattox campaign, about ten days of running battles ending April 9, 1865, cost the Union about 11,000 casualties, and ended in the surrender of Lee's remnant of 26,765.

Confederate dead and wounded in the meantime were about 6,500. Lesser battles are famous for their casualties. At Franklin, Tennessee, November 30, 1864, General Hood's Confederates lost over 6,000 of 21,000 effectives -most of them in about two hours. Six Confederate generals died there. Hood lost about 8,000 men in his assault before Atlanta, July 22, 1864; Sherman's Union forces lost about 3,800. The small battle of Wilson's Creek, Missouri, August 10, 1861, was typical of the savagery of much of the war's fighting. The Union force Of 5,400 men lost over 1,200; the Confederates, over 11,000 strong, lost about the same number. The first battle of Manassas/Bull Run, though famous as the first large engagement, was relatively light in cost: 2,708 for the Union, 1,981 for the Confederates. The casualty rolls struck home to families and regiments. The Confederate General, John B. Gordon, cited the case of the Christian family, of Christiansburg, Virginia, which suffered eighteen dead in the war. The 1st Maine Heavy Artillery, in a charge at Petersburg, Virginia, 18 June, 1864, sustained a "record" loss of the war-635 of its 900 men within seven minutes. Another challenger is the 26th North Carolina, which lost 714, of its 800 men at Gettysburg-in numbers and percentage the war's greatest losses. On the first day this regiment lost 584 dead and wounded, and when roll was called the next morning for G Company, one man answered, and he had been knocked unconscious by a shell burst the day before. This roll was called by a sergeant who lay on a stretcher with a severe leg wound. The 24th Michigan, a gallant Federal regiment which was in front of the North Carolinians on the first day, lost 362 of its 496 men. More than 3,000 horses were killed at Gettysburg, and one artillery battalion, the 9th Massachusetts, lost 80 of its 88 animals in the Trostle farmyard. A brigade from Vermont lost 1,645 Of its 2,100 men during a week of fighting in the Wilderness. The Irish Brigade, Union, had a total muster Of 7,000 during the war, and returned to New York in '65 with 1,000. One company was down to seven men. The 69th New York of this brigade lost 16 of 19 officers, and had 75 per cent casualties among enlisted men. In the Irish Brigade, Confederate, from Louisiana, Company A dwindled from go men to 3 men and an officer in March, '65. Company B went from 100 men to 2. Experts have pointed out that the famed Light Brigade at Balaklava lost only 36.7 per cent of its men, and that at least 63 Union regiments lost as much as 50 per cent in single battles. At Gettysburg 23 Federal regiments suffered losses of more than half their strength, including the well-known Iron Brigade (886 of 1,538 engaged). Many terrible casualty tolls were incurred in single engagements, like that of the Polish Regiment of Louisiana at Frayser's Farm during the Seven Days, where the outfit was cut to pieces and had to be consolidated with the 20th Louisiana. In this action one company of the Poles lost 33 of 42 men. One authority reports that of 3,530 Indians who fought for the Union, 1,018 were killed, a phenomenally high rate. of 178,975 Negro Union troops, this expert says, over 36,000 died. Some regimental losses in battle:

| Regiment               | Battle     | Strength | Per Cent |
|------------------------|------------|----------|----------|
| 1st Texas, CSA         | Antietam   | 226      | 82.3     |
| 1st Minnesota, US      | Gettysburg | 262      | 82       |
| 21st Georgia, CSA      | Manassas   | 242      | 76       |
| 141st Pennsylvania, US | Gettysburg | 198      | 75.7     |
| 101st New York, US     | Manassas   | 168      | 73.8     |

|                             |                 |     |      |
|-----------------------------|-----------------|-----|------|
| 6th Mississippi, CSA        | Shiloh          | 425 | 70.5 |
| 25th Massachusetts, US      | Cold Harbor     | 310 | 70   |
| 36th Wisconsin, US          | Bethesda Church | 240 | 69   |
| 20th Massachusetts, US      | Fredericksburg  | 238 | 68.4 |
| 8th Tennessee, CSA          | Stone's River   | 444 | 68.7 |
| 10th Tennessee, CSA         | Chickamauga     | 328 | 68   |
| 8th Vermont, US             | Cedar Creek     | 156 | 67.9 |
| Palmetto Sharpshooters, CSA | Frayser's Farm  | 215 | 67.7 |
| 81st Pennsylvania, US       | Fredericksburg  | 261 | 67.4 |

Scores of other regiments on both sides registered losses in single engagements of above 50 per cent. Confederate losses by states, in dead and wounded only, and with many records missing (especially those of Alabama):

|                |        |
|----------------|--------|
| North Carolina | 20,602 |
| Virginia       | 6,947  |
| Mississippi    | 6,807  |
| South Carolina | 4,760  |
| Arkansas       | 3,782  |
| Georgia        | 3,702  |
| Tennessee      | 3,425  |
| Louisiana      | 3,059  |
| Texas          | 1,260  |
| Florida        | 1,047  |
| Alabama        | 724    |

(Statisticians recognize these as fragmentary, from a report of 1866; they serve as a rough guide to relative losses by states).

In addition to its dead and wounded from battle and disease, the Union listed:

|                      |        |
|----------------------|--------|
| Deaths in Prison     | 24,866 |
| Drowning             | 4,944  |
| Accidental deaths    | 4,144  |
| Murdered             | 520    |
| Suicides             | 391    |
| Sunstroke            | 313    |
| Military executions  | 267    |
| Killed after capture | 104    |
| Executed by enemy    | 64     |
| Unclassified         | 14,155 |

Source: "The Civil War, Strange and Fascinating Facts," by Burke Davis