

US Civil War - facts, figures & trivia

A few facts, figures and trivia about the US Civil War, the bloodiest war ever fought on American soil.

The US Civil War was the bloodiest war ever fought on American soil. During an average day during the war, approximately 600 people were killed.

By the end of the war, over 618,000 people had died. This is more Americans than WWI, WWII, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War combined.

Ten most costly Civil War battles

1. Battle of Gettysburg

Date - July 1–3, 1863
Total Casualties - 51,112
Union Casualties - 23,049
Confederate Casualties - 28,063

2. Battle of Chickamauga

Date - September 19–20, 1863
Total Casualties - 34,624
Union Casualties - 16,170
Confederate Casualties - 18,454

3. Battle of Chancellorsville

Date - May 1–4, 1863
Total Casualties - 30,099
Union Casualties - 17,278
Confederate Casualties - 12,821

4. Battle of Spotsylvania

Date - May 8–21, 1864
Total Casualties - 30,399
Union Casualties - 18,399
Confederate Casualties - 12,000

5. Battle of Antietam

Date - September 17, 1862
Total Casualties - 23,134
Union Casualties - 12,410
Confederate Casualties - 10,724

6. Battle of the Wilderness

Date - May 5–7, 1864

Total Casualties - 25,416
Union Casualties - 17,666
Confederate Casualties - 11,000

7. Second Battle of Manassas

Date - August 29–30, 1862
Total Casualties - 25,251
Union Casualties - 16,054
Confederate Casualties - 9,197

8. Battle of Stones River

Date - December 31, 1862
Total Casualties - 34,624
Union Casualties - 16,170
Confederate Casualties - 11,739

9. Battle of Shiloh

Date - April 6–7, 1862
Total Casualties - 23,741
Union Casualties - 13,047
Confederate Casualties - 10,694

10. Battle of Fort Donelson

Date - February 13–16, 1862
Total Casualties - 19,455
Union Casualties - 2,832
Confederate Casualties - 16,623

US Civil War Trivia

- During the Civil War, 2% of the U.S. population died. This is equivalent to six million men today. While rifles were the deadliest weapons during the war, disease killed more men. Camps became breeding grounds for measles, chicken pox, and mumps. One million Union soldiers contracted malaria.
- One of every 65 Federals and one of every 45 Confederates were killed in action.
- A Civil War soldier's chance of surviving the war was

about one in four.

- More Americans died at the Bloody Angle at Spotsylvania, Virginia, in May 1864 than at Omaha Beach on D-Day in 1944.
- The youngest soldier in the Civil War was a 9 year-old boy from Mississippi. The oldest was an 80 year-old from Iowa. More than 10,000 soldiers serving in the Union Army were under 18 years old.
- Daniel Emmett, the composer of "Dixie" was not only from the North, but he was also a loyal Unionist. He was disgusted by the song's popularity in the South. Lincoln claimed that it was one of "the best tunes I ever heard." Listen to the song by clicking [here](#).
- An estimated 800 wounded men burned to death at the Battle of the Wilderness because they were unable to crawl away from advancing brush fires.
- Immediately after the war, two out of three men sentenced to state prisons in the North were Civil War veterans.
- In the 20 years after the Civil War, the national divorce rate increased 150%.
- Seven future U.S. presidents served in the Civil War: Ulysses S. Grant, Rutherford B. Hayes, William McKinley, James Garfield, Benjamin Harrison, Chester A. Arthur, and Andrew Johnson.

- The Civil War prison camp Elmira had two observation towers constructed for onlookers. Citizens paid 15 cents to look at the inmates. Concession stands by the towers sold peanuts, cakes, and lemonade while the men inside starved.
- Nearly 3,000 people died in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. About the same number of men died in the first 15 minutes at Grant's assault at Cold Harbor on June 3, 1864.
- The Twenty-Sixth North Carolina Infantry suffered the worst regimented losses in a single battle: 708 of 800 killed, wounded, or missing at Gettysburg.
- In the North, more than 1/3 of all men of military age served in the war. For the South, it was nearly 2/3.
- Fighting took place on each day of the war, which lasted approximately 1,396 days, from 1861 to 1865. Nearly 10,455 military "events" took place during the war.
- During the Civil War, diarrhea (Greek, meaning "I flow away") was the most common and deadly disease. More Civil War soldiers died from diarrhea than were killed in battle. About one in 40 cases was fatal. Death came from dehydration, exhaustion, or the rupture of the intestinal wall.
- Both the war's bloodiest day (Antietam) and its bloodiest battle (Gettysburg) occurred in Union states. More than 5,000 soldiers died at Antietam, making September 17, 1862, the single bloodiest day

in U.S. military history.

- The Civil War was the first time the national draft was used in American history (April 16, 1862).
- The Civil War was known by more than 25 names, including "The Brothers War," "The War to Suppress Yankee Arrogance," "The War for the Union," and "The War of the Rebellion."
- Of the three million soldiers in the Civil War, 1% were regular army, 9% were draftees or substitutes, and the rest were volunteers.
- The amphibious landing of 110,000 at Iwo Jima cost 5,931 American lives and wounded 17,372 more. Roughly the same numbers and losses were involved in the Civil War battle at Chickamauga. Iwo Jima spanned 36 days. Chickamauga lasted 36 hours (September 19-20, 1863).
- Gettysburg was the largest battle ever fought in North America. Its victor, General Meade, was born in Spain.
- The bullet (especially the Minie) accounted for more than 90% of battle fatalities. The soft, low-velocity bullets tumbled and spread apart inside the body, which caused excessive and irreparable tissue damage. Only 4% of Civil War battlefield casualties came from the muzzle of a canon.
- On average, of every 100 fatalities on the battlefield, five men died from limb wounds, 12 from punctures to the lower abdomen, 15 from damage to the heart or liver, and more than 50 from lacerations to



BRAVERY REWARDED: The first U.S. Medal of Honor was awarded during the Civil War on March 25, 1863. It was awarded to six survivors of the April 1862 Andrew's Raid. In all, 2,625 soldiers and sailors received the medal during the war. There were 433 awarded during WWII.

the head or neck.

- The U.S. Army did not start issuing dog tags until 1906.
- In Vietnam, one in 400 of the wounded died of their injuries. In the Korean War, one in 50 wounded American soldiers died. In the Civil War, one in seven wounded Federals died and one in five wounded Confederates died—sometimes within minutes, sometimes after months of suffering.
- Amy Clarke wanted to fight near her husband during the Civil War and so disguised herself as "Richard Anderson" to join a Tennessee unit of the Confederacy. Although her husband died at Shiloh, she continued to fight until she was wounded and captured by Union soldiers. When they discovered she was a woman, she was sent back to the Con-



AMPUTATION BOX: The most common operation performed on soldiers during the Civil War was amputation. The best surgeon could have a limb severed and discarded within five minutes. Civil War doctors were nicknamed “sawbones.” There were 60,000 partial or complete amputations during the war. Surgeons never washed their hands after an operation, because all blood was assumed to be the same, nor did he wash his instruments.

- federate - in a dress.
- The Civil War was the first time a submarine ever sank an enemy ship when the submarine the Hunley sank the USS Housatonic. However, the Hunley was damaged in the attack, wandered seaward, and sank drowning all eight hands. Only five of Housatonic’s 155 died. The Hunley was finally recovered 136 years later.
- In 2008, the body of a Union soldier was discovered in Antietam. His remains were laid to rest in the regimental home of New York State.
- Nearly 1/3 of Union Army soldiers were immigrants (7.5% were Irish; 10% were German). Other immigrant soldiers were French, Italian, Polish, English, and Scottish. Approximately one in 10 were African American.
- African American soldiers were allowed to join the Union Army in 1863, but they were paid lower wages than white soldiers and were charged rent for their clothing. Some black Union soldiers refused their salary for 18 months as protest. In September 1864, they finally received equal pay.
- During the war, the Union confiscated Robert E. Lee’s estate and turned it into a cemetery so that he would be reminded of the carnage he caused. It later became Arlington National Cemetery.
- During the Civil War, generals usually led their soldiers into battle, a rare occurrence in modern wars. Because of this, generals were 50% more likely to die in combat than privates were.
- Although both the North and South did not allow women in the army, it is estimated that between 250 and 400 women fought disguised as men.
- To prevent escape at Camp Douglas in Chicago, prisoners were not allowed to wear clothes. Even blankets were taken away. Many Confederates froze to death.
- Edward Everett, the main speaker at the Gettysburg dedication, spoke for 2 hours. President Abraham Lincoln, who was invited almost as an afterthought, spoke for two minutes. His speech went down in history.
- The North expected to win because (a) they had more men to fight (22 million people in the North versus seven million white people in the South), (b) there were more factories in the North to make guns and bullets, and (c) the North had more railroads for

transporting guns and supplies.

- The South expected to win because (a) Northerners did not know their way around the South, where most of the fighting would take place, (b) Southern farmers were already skilled marksmen and riding horses, and (c) they were fighting to save a way of life.
- Confederate General Thomas J. “Stonewall” Jackson got his nickname during the first Battle of Bull Run. During battle, his men noted he stood “like a stone wall.” He was later accidentally shot and killed by his own men.
- At Gettysburg, the First Minnesota captured the battle flag of the Twenty-eighth Virginia. In 2001, the state of Virginia requested that Minnesota return it. As of 2017, Minnesota still possessed the banner.
- The Union uniform was blue and the Confederate uniform was gray. But because clothes were scarce during the war, it was common for soldiers to wear “enemy” colors and mistakenly be fired upon by their own men.
- The first battle between ironclads occurred during the Civil War in March 1862, between the Confederate ship Merrimack and the Union Monitor. No winner was declared.
- Only two people were convicted of war crimes in the Civil War. The first was Confederate Capt. Henry Wirz. He was tried and executed after the war for murder and conspiracy associated with his command at Andersonville,



ONE AND ONLY: Dr. Mary Edwards Walker was not only the first woman surgeon in U.S. Military history, but she was also the only woman in the Civil War to be awarded the Medal of Honor, the highest honour given to a citizen of the U.S. She is the only female recipient of the award to date.

- an infamous prison camp. The second was Confederate guerilla Champ Ferguson.
- The Industrial Revolution facilitated the mass production of weaponry, but the medical revolution and its use of antiseptics was still years away. Additionally, while rifled weapons and mini bullets increased the firing range threefold, soldiers still used traditional military methods, which depended on massed infantry at close range. All of this led to high mortality rates and excessively bloody battles. The Civil War became dubbed as the “first modern war.”
- Of the nearly 200,000 African Americans who fought for the North, more than 100,000 were runaway slaves. The number of African Americans who enlisted in the Union Army was larger than the number of soldiers in the entire Confederate Army in the final months of the war. Twenty-five African American soldiers were awarded



THE MEDIA GETS INVOLVED: The Civil War was the first war to be immediately reported in the press. The first 'war' photographs were taken at the Battle of Antietam.

the Medal of Honor. Approximately 35,000 of the nearly 200,000 died during the war.

- An Iowa regiment had a rule that any man who uttered an oath should read a chapter in the Bible. Several of them got nearly through the Old Testament.
- During the Battle of Antietam, Clara Barton tended the wounded so close to the fighting that a bullet went through her sleeve and killed a man she was treating.
- Not fond of ceremonies or military music, Ulysses S. Grant said he could only recognize two tunes. "One was Yankee Doodle, the other one wasn't."
- Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., future chief Justice, was wounded three times during the Civil War - in the chest at Ball's Bluff, in the back at Antietam and in the heel at Chancellorsville
- Confederate Private Henry Stanley fought for the Sixth Arkansas, and was captured at Shiloh, but survived to

go to Africa to find Dr. Livingstone and utter the famous words "Doctor Livingstone I presume."

- On July 4, 1863, after 48 days of siege, Confederate General John C. Pemberton surrendered the city of Vicksburg, Mississippi to Union General, Ulysses S. Grant. For the next 81 years, the city Vicksburg, Mississippi did not celebrate the Fourth of July.
- On both sides of the conflict, potential recruits were offered monetary rewards, or "bounties," for enlisting, as much as \$677 in New York. "Bounty jumping" soon became so popular, that hundreds of men signed up, and then deserted, to enlist again elsewhere.
- For those who were drafted, the law allowed them to pay a substitute to go in their place. Another type of "bounty jumper" was born when men would hire out to more than one draftee and then make a hasty exit once they were

paid. The record for bounty jumping was held by John O'Connor, who admitted to hiring himself out 32 times before being caught. He received a 4 year prison term.

- In the battle of Gettysburg, 1,100 ambulances were in use. The medical director of the Union army boasted that all the wounded were picked up from the field within 12 hours after the battle was over. This was a far cry from the second battle of Bull Run, when many of the wounded were left on the field in the rain, heat, and sun for three or four days.
- On the night before the Battle of Gettysburg, Confederate commander Robert E. Lee had a heart attack. This has been cited as one of the reasons why he made some critical mistakes, such as the costly and notoriously foolhardy Pickett's Charge.
- Senator John J. Crittendon of Kentucky had two sons who



THAT'S NOT ME: General Ulysses Simpson Grant was actually named Hiram Ulysses Grant. His name was incorrectly recorded on his West Point application.



TAKING A CHANCE AT CHANCELLORSVILLE: During the Battle of Chancellorsville, at least one Union soldier discovered he was the victim of corrupt government contractors when he found that his rifle cartridges were filled with dirt rather than gunpowder.

became major generals during the Civil War: one for the North, one for the South.

- One of the unlikely heroes of the Battle of Gettysburg was General George Custer. A few miles from the main battle the Southern cavalry under General J.E.B Stuart was attempting to ride around the rear of the Northern position, where they could have caused chaos on the North's supply lines. They were stopped by Custer who defeated a much larger force.
- The Confederate cruiser Shenandoah sailed completely around the world, raiding Union whalers and commerce vessels. The ship and its crew

surrendered to English authorities in Liverpool more than six months after Lee's surrender at Appomattox.

- The Confederate forces lost 63 Brigadier Generals, seven Major Generals, and three Lieutenant Generals during the war.
- More than 3,000 horses were killed at Gettysburg
- Thomas Stewart, aged 92 years, of East Newtown, Ohio, was a private in the 101st Ohio regiment, and took part in the battle of Perryville, where he was complimented for his bravery and soldierly bearing.
- At the Battle of Gettysburg the commander of the Union

Army was brand new. General George Meade had been appointed only three days before the battle started.

- Confederate General Martin Green's last words were "A bullet has not yet been molded that will kill me." He said this in response to a warning to keep his head down while inspecting the defenses at Vicksburg. Moments later he was shot in the head and killed by a Union sharpshooter.
- The Battle of Gettysburg was about shoes. Many of the Confederate soldiers were barefoot because all of the shoe factories were in the north. A contingent went to Gettysburg because there was a shoe factory there. They wanted to capture it, but when they arrived they found thousands of Union soldiers already in Gettysburg.
- The rebel yell was a battle cry used by Confederate soldiers during the American Civil War. Confederate soldiers used the yell during charges to intimidate the enemy and boost their own morale. Watch rare footage, taken in 1935, of Confederate veterans recreating the rebel yell by clicking [here](#).
- On May 13, 1865, a month after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Private John J. Williams of the 34th Indiana became the last man killed in the Civil War, in a battle at Palmito Ranch, Texas. The final skirmish was a Confederate victory.