

ISCHUA VALLEY

HISTORICAL SOCIETY

HONORING OUR MEN IN BLUE

America is commemorating the 150th Anniversary of the Civil War from 2011 to 2015. Eleven Southern States, calling themselves The Confederacy seceded from the USA. They were known as the Gray Army since it was the popular uniform color. The Northern States, known as The Union, were determined to preserve the unity of their country. They were known as the Blue army since their uniforms were blue.

A large number of men from Cattaraugus County engaged in many of the battles and some of them made the ultimate sacrifice. Others returned but many of them suffered after-effects of the war such as problems with dysentery, consumption and amputations.

Approximately 110,070 Union soldiers were killed in battle and about 250,000 men died from disease. Other casualties of war included:

- 24,866 deaths in prison camps
- 2,944 deaths by drowning
- 4,144 accidental deaths
- 520 murders
- 391 by suicides
- 313 sunstroke deaths
- 267 military executions
- 104 killed after capture
- 64 executed by the enemy
- 14,155 deaths listed as unclassified

These approximate numbers were Union losses only. The total number of casualties for both the Union and Confederate Armies was 970,000 or 3% of the population of the United States.

During their enlistment, recruits on both sides suffered from wearing heavy woolen uniforms, even in the summer. They had leaky tents and food that was often contaminated by maggots. Sometimes they were forced to forage for food and fuel. Soldiers depended on their families back home for small luxuries.

The men were poorly trained, badly organized and terribly fed and sheltered. Yet they persisted and paid a high price to preserve the unity of their country.