

The Iowa War Records Commission

From the *Annals of Iowa* (1), Volume XXV-Third Series (JUL 1943-APR 1944), pp 93-104:

“No tree can grow without roots; and the height of each tree is measured by the length of its underground parts, that which the eye can not see.
Likewise, no nation or people can exist without a past.

The significance of their future in part depends upon the depth of their understanding of that past. An understanding and an appreciation of history is akin to a constant mobilization of the spiritual and cultural resources to which one is heir.

In knowledge and in understanding there is power...

The Iowa State Department of History and Archives is premised upon the conviction that the records of Iowa and her people are *at all times* worthy of keeping. The proposed Iowa War Records Commission was born of the strength of that conviction...

The present is the warp which woven with the woof of the past produces on the loom of time the pattern of the future. An understanding of that heritage, is, if rightly comprehended, like possessing a constant inventory of one's resources as a people. Current history recording, therefore, is like keeping a running inventory of your “stock.”

In normal times the preservation of the current and the past history of Iowa is the responsibility and the obligation of the historical societies of the state, of which this Department is one of the principal two.

But these are not normal times. This is war...

The proposed Iowa War Records Commission is designed simply to preserve the significant records of both activities [the military and the civilian home front] in Iowa, not only for the “State”, but for the local communities as well; it is a means by which all interested organizations in the state, including particularly the local organizations, may join cooperatively in performing this task...

In each county the Civilian Defense Council, the county libraries, the county historical society, the American Legion posts, the women's service groups, and other organizations of business and farm groups should unite for the task of preserving their war records...a county war roster roll, doughboy letters, soldier diaries, and photographs of enlisted personnel and of civilian war activities, are only a few of the activities which should be thoughtfully approached by organizations in every one of Iowa's ninety-nine counties...

A strong plant needs good seed. A tall tree requires deep roots.
A future of promise for any people rests upon a worthy past, worthily kept.”

Subsequently (2), in *Annals of Iowa*: “Substantial progress is being made by the war records division of the State Department of History and Archives. This work was entered upon early, the purpose being to secure, at a time when records are fresh and available, the printed, manuscript, photographs and other records relating to Iowa's part in the present war of the nations.”

One result of that cooperative process was the *State Historical Society of Iowa: War Records Division, County WWII Casualty Lists, 1946*.
The Associated Press reviewed those records and reported (3):

“Emmet County Leads in War Dead Ratio

Des Moines (AP) Of the 7,213 Iowans killed in military action during World War II the highest percentage according to population was from Emmet county, casualty figures of the war records division of the state historical department showed Wednesday.

Emmet county had 55 war dead or 4.1 for each 1,000 population. Adams county was close second with 4 for each 1,000. The casualties were compared with 1940 census figures. Other counties with relatively high casualties were Cerro Gordo with 3.7 for 1,000, Decatur 3.8, Louisa 3.8, Montgomery 3.9, and Story 3.7.”

A review of the *County WWII Casualty Lists, 1946*,
 conducted during AUG 2010 (4):

<u>county</u>	<u>dead per 1000 population</u>	<u>total dead</u>	<u>1940 county population (5)</u>
Adams	4.23 %	43	10,156
Decatur	4.21 %	59	14,012
Emmet	3.95 %	53	13,406
Montgomery	3.89 %	61	15,697
Cerro Gordo	3.88 %	170	43,845
Louisa	3.78 %	43	11,384
Story	3.68 %	123	33,434

NOTES:

(1) *An Historical Quarterly*, established 1863, published by the Iowa State Department of History and Archives, Historical Building, Des Moines.

(2) An editorial in *Annals of Iowa*, date unknown (although mention is made of an event which occurred on 25 JUL 1943, and “Iowa's part in the present war of the nations”), pp 139-140.

(3) *Council Bluffs (Iowa) Nonpareil*, 03 JAN 1946, page 2, column 5.
 War dead ratio comparisons were not made with counties in other states.

(4) *County WWII Casualty Lists, 1946*, archived in Des Moines IA, at the State Historical Society of Iowa, box 6, location 553/01/02. Some individuals in the County Lists are listed with towns to which they were associated. “Casualties” were those active service individuals KIA (Killed In Action), DOW (Died Of Wounds), or DNB (Death Non Battle), while serving their country. Researcher: Denise Gripp, DBA Ever-After Enterprises, Indianola IA, <http://www.everafterents.com>, telephone 515.961.8277.

(5) *Iowa's Numbers: 150 Years of Decennial Census Data With a Glance to the Future*, Willis J. Goudy, Department of Sociology, Iowa State University, Ames IA 50011 (2008), pp 22-24.

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