



The 55th North Carolina in the Civil War: A History And Roster

Jeffrey M. Girvan

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With the advent of the Civil War in 1861, young men from both Confederate and Union states rushed to volunteer for military duty in a war that many believed would be quickly resolved. The spring of 1862, however, brought the realization that not only was the conflict going to last longer than expected, but additional troops would be needed on both sides. It was at this time that the 55th Regiment North Carolina Troops entered the war. Composed primarily of farmers and tradesmen, the regiment also presented a microcosm of the Tar Heel State with a regionally diverse membership from more than 20 counties. Along with these members came an equal variety of political ideologies, social institutions and range of economic stability—all differences that faded in the face of a common enemy. Finding motivation for their fight in a simple defense of their homes and families, the men of the 55th North Carolina made significant contributions to the Confederate cause, fighting—and often dying—in some of the war's bloodiest conflicts. From its formation in 1862 through its dissolution in 1865, this comprehensive history tells the story of the men who served in the 55th North Carolina. Drawing on letters, memoirs, diaries and recollections, it depicts the Civil War through the eyes of the soldiers, enhancing modern-day understanding of what it was like to fight for the Confederate States of America. While providing information on the battles in which the 55th North Carolina took part (including the little known Suffolk campaign), the main focus of the work is the everyday life of the men—the ever-present influence of politics and religion as well as the effects of disease and combat. Appendices provide a breakdown of the companies in the regiment; the regimental roster; a list of men who died of disease; and a record of the men from the 55th who were killed in battle. Contemporary photographs are also included.

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