

THE BOYS' WAR

Statistics

According to *The Photographic History of the Civil War*, the Union Army numbered about 2.7 million men, distributed by age as follows

Over 21	700,000	16	100,000
19 – 21	1,000,000	14-15	100,000
18	200,000	13 or under	300
17	600,000	10 or under	25

Another source suggests a different distribution

30% under 21 30% between 21 and 25 30% between 25 and 30 10 % over 30

The youngest “soldiers” were typically drummers, fifers, or bugle boys. However, many of them found themselves in combat.

Johnny Clem – The Union’s Youngest Soldier

- Ran away from home to join the Union Army at 9
- Accompanied the 22nd Michigan for two years as a drummer boy and “mascot”
- Allowed to enlist at the age of 11
- Promoted to sergeant in 1863 after shooting a Confederate colonel demanding his surrender during the Battle of Chickamauga
- Captured by Southern forces, he was used in propaganda claiming that the North was so desperate that it had to send children to fight
- Discharged in 1864.
- Failing in his attempt to enter West Point, President Grant commissioned him as a lieutenant.
- Achieved the rank of major general before retirement in 1916



Sergeant Clem, Age 12, 1863. Wikipedia. 18 July 2008. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:JohnnClem_1863.jpg>

For a variety of information about drummer boys in the Civil War, click on

<http://www.emints.org/ethemes/resources/S00000789.shtml>