



# **A Light and Uncertain Hold:History of the Sixty Sixth Ohio Volunteer Infantry**

*David Thackery*

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Curiosity piqued by two poems written by his great-great-grandmother, one recounting the pride and anxiety of a young woman as she witnessed her brother going off to fight in a war to save the Union, and the other telling the story of his death in battle initiated David Thackery's scholarly exploration into the history of the Sixty-sixth Ohio Volunteer Infantry and the wartime history of Champaign County, Ohio, from which it was recruited. Not only a military history, *A Light and Uncertain Hold* is also a penetrating and provocative social history which deals with the home front, morale, reenlistment, and the memory and commemoration of the war. The words and stories of individual soldiers give depth and substance to the regiment's experience. The great dividing lie the most important catalyst in the creation of regimental pride and identification, was the introduction to combat. In the case of the Sixty-sixth, its first combat experience was Port Republic. This set these soldiers apart from the civilian world whose structures and protections were no longer relevant. The new veterans were now divorced from the security of their civilian lives and could rely only on one another in matters which were truly life and death.

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