

# The Civil War



In 1861 Michigan was asked to supply four regiments of men for the growing war down south. Volunteers were so numerous that Michigan sent seven regiments. Over 80 men from Nankin township volunteered, about 30 of them being from Wayne itself.



Many of the men from Detroit and Wayne County were organized into the Michigan 24th infantry regiment. This group was assigned to the famous Iron Brigade, which was gaining a reputation for their strong discipline, unique uniform appearance and tenacious fighting ability.



The group saw limited action at Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, and it was after this that the Michigan men got their distinctive black hats. These hats became the unique symbol of the Iron Brigade.



At Gettysburg the Iron Brigade fought hard on the first day of battle and lost 80% of their men, but secured a good position for the Union forces.



The Iron Brigade was replenished with men from other states and went on to the Battle of the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor and the Siege of Petersburg. The group was mustered out and sent home June 30, 1865 at wars end.



Over 90,000 Michigan men volunteered for the war, about 23% of the 1860 population. This also included 1,600 African American soldiers. About 14,800 Michigan men died, 4,448 from wounds and over 10,000 from disease. Most Wayne men returned home, but William Houston was the single casualty, being killed at Gettysburg in 1863.