

The Battle of New Bern (also known as the Battle of New Berne) was fought on March 14, 1862, near the city of New Bern, North Carolina, as part of the Burnside Expedition of the American Civil War. The US Army's Coast Division, led by Brigadier General Ambrose Burnside and accompanied by armed vessels from the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron, were opposed by an undermanned and badly trained Confederate force of North Carolina soldiers and militia led by Brigadier General Lawrence O'B. Branch. Although the defenders fought behind breastworks that had been set up before the battle, their line had a weak spot in its center that was exploited by the attacking Federal soldiers. When the center of the line was penetrated, many of the militia broke, forcing a general retreat of the entire Confederate force. General Branch was unable to regain control of his troops until they had retreated to Kinston, more than 30 miles (about 50 km) away. New Bern came under Federal control, and remained so for the rest of the war.