

Civil War- Part 5: Military Movements, Battles, and Outcomes in the State ^[1]

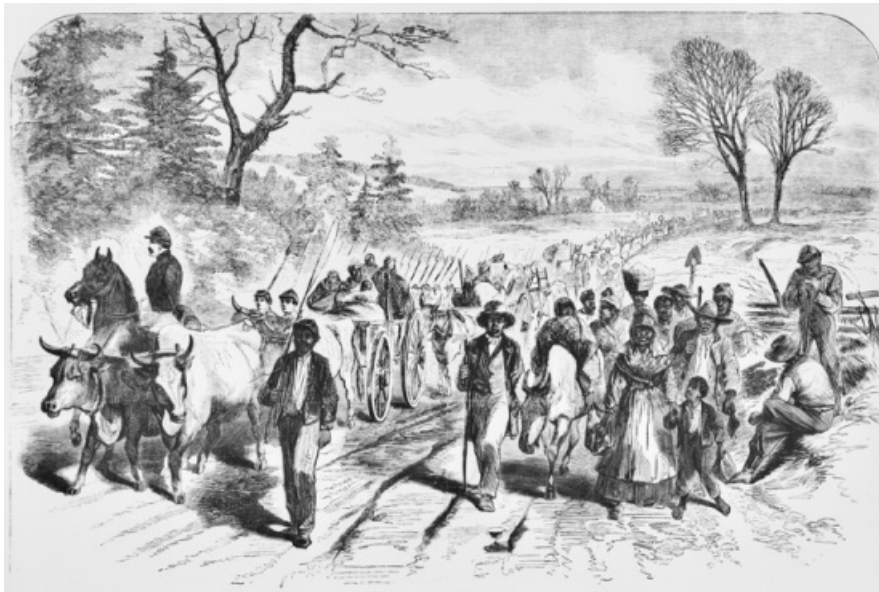
Civil War

by Tom Belton and Paul Branch, 2006

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See also: [Bentonville, Battle of](#) ^[2]; [Blockade-Running](#) ^[3]; [Fort Fisher, Battle of](#) ^[4]; [Ironclads](#) ^[5]; [Military Installations, Civil War](#) ^[6]; [Peace Movement \(Civil War\)](#) ^[7]; [Secession Movement](#) ^[8]; [Sherman's March](#) ^[9]; [Union Volunteer Regiments](#) ^[10]; [Civil War](#) ^[11]; [Civil War to 1900](#) ^[12]; [Civil War Battles](#) ^[13]; [Amputations in the Civil War](#) ^[14]

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African Americans joining the Union lines near New Bern in early 1863. North Carolina Collection, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill Library.

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Part 5: Military Movements, Battles, and Outcomes in the State




Civil War campaigns and battles. Map by Mark Anderson Moore, courtesy North Carolina Office of Archives and History, Raleigh. (Click to view map.) ^[20]

Union victories in the Eastern theater during 1861-62 were largely limited to [coastal North Carolina](#) ^[21], but these immediately illuminated the Union strategy of controlling the ports and thus limiting supplies to the southern interior. [Hatteras](#) ^[22] fell in a Union amphibious invasion in the late summer of 1861, and on 8 Feb. 1862 [Roanoke Island](#) ^[23] surrendered to Union troops under Gen. Ambrose Burnside. Soon Federal forces held New Bern, Morehead City, Beaufort, and [Fort Macon](#) ^[24] and controlled much of eastern North Carolina.

North Carolinians were appalled over these quick northern victories and furious with the Richmond government, which had left the state largely undefended. For a short time, Lincoln appointee [Edward Stanly](#) ^[25], headquartered in New Bern, served as military governor of North Carolina. [Confederate](#) ^[26] political and military leaders hoped that newly constructed ironclad vessels would be the key in freeing eastern North Carolina. Although never tested in battle, the [CSS Neuse](#) ^[27] was built to liberate New Bern and other coastal towns, while the [CSS Albemarle](#) ^[28] played a significant role in the [Battle](#)

of Plymouth ^[29] (17-20 Apr. 1864).

In January 1865 Federal forces captured Fort Fisher ^[30] and a month later the port of Wilmington ^[31]. Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman ^[32] entered North Carolina from the south, and the Battle of Bentonville ^[2] on 19-21 Mar. 1865 was the only major attempt after the Battle of Atlanta to defeat Sherman's army. Federal cavalry under Maj. Gen. George H. Stoneman in late March and April 1865 raided and destroyed property in North Carolina's mountain communities and in the western Piedmont. ^[33] On 26 Apr. 1865, at the Bennett farmhouse near Durham ^[34], Gen. Joseph Johnston surrendered his army to Sherman—the largest Confederate troop surrender of the war. North Carolinians such as Daniel H. Hill, William Dorsey Pender, Stephen Dodson Ramseur ^[35], James J. Pettigrew, and Robert F. Hoke ^[36] proved themselves to be among the most reliable Confederate generals, and Braxton Bragg ^[37] was among the most controversial.

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