

CTF

History 225

Re: Notes on Sumter Crisis

The firing on the fort remarkably did not kill a single defender. The only casualties at Sumter were a few mules.

But after Major Anderson, the commander of the fort, surrendered it was military protocol or tradition that a fair well salute be made before abandoning the fort to the state of South Carolina. The Rebels allow him the 100-gun salute before removing the flag from the parapets.

It was during this exercise that private Daniel Hough, number two man of the gun crew, inserted a cartridge into the muzzle of number two gun for the 17<sup>th</sup> round in the salute, it exploded taking off his right arm. In minutes he was dead. Probably the number one man failed to sponge the barrel of the barbette gun sufficiently to extinguish the flame from the previous salute.

Hough was the first casualty of the war. Some one and a half million would come after Hough.

Indicators that this would be a peculiar war.

The commander of Ft. Sumter was West Point graduate, a major Robert Anderson. Anderson was a native of the slave-holding state of Kentucky who was married to a woman from Georgia. Anderson was a slave holder and, as mentioned, with Southern antecedents, and a Southern sympathizer. Despite his personal views he was duty-bound to hold the fort as long as possible. After 34 hours of shelling under a rain of 4,000 Confederate shells, he surrendered when there was no other course of action open to him.

Personal irony in Anderson's case. About 80 years earlier during the American Revolution, his father, Major Robert Anderson, was the commander defending Ft. Moutrie (then it was called Fort Sullivan), when the British attacked Charleston. Daddy Anderson was forced to surrender Ft. Sullivan to the British. Like father, like son.

The Confederate officer directing the bombardment from the Charleston shore guns into the Sumter was Pierre Gustave Beauregard. Beauregard was a student of Anderson's at West Point and was so talented in the science of artillery that Anderson had him appointed after graduation as an instructor in gunnery.

When the Federals left the fort it was first occupied by a Colonel Roswell Ripley. Ripley was a native of Ohio.