

# Activity and Determination

In the chapter titled "Activity and Determination," set on March 5, the atmosphere surrounding Fort Sumter reflects an increasing urgency and preparation amidst the escalating tensions of the Civil War. The men stationed at Fort Sumter, unable to access Lincoln's inaugural address for two days, observe a notable uptick in activity at the surrounding batteries in Charleston Harbor. This heightened activity is attributed to both the president's speech and the arrival of General Beauregard, who is tasked with organizing defenses.

Captain Foster, monitoring the situation from Fort Sumter, sees three steamers delivering troops and supplies to the Iron Battery at Cummings Point on March 4. On the following night, he notes the landing of a large force alongside the arrival of nine new cannon and portable "hot shot" furnaces, which are designed to heat cannonballs. The sheer number of soldiers suggests a shortage of shelter, with many gathered around bivouac fires, evidencing their discomfort as the weather abruptly turns cold. Foster expresses sympathy for their plight, as conditions become harsh.

Both Foster and Major Anderson perceive a change in the determination and urgency at the Carolina batteries, now under the capable command of Beauregard, whom Anderson knows personally as a former student. The mutual respect between the two men is evident, reflected in Anderson's report to Adjutant Cooper about the "activity and determination" in the area.

Despite these concerns, Foster harbors a small sense of relief upon determining that a much-feared "floating battery" may not be as threatening as believed, due to its draft and instability when loaded. He conveys this assessment back to Washington, expressing confidence that the floating battery will not pose significant challenges.

On the Confederate side, General Beauregard expresses the urgency of gathering enough artillery and powder for a potential siege while preparing his troops, which he feels are not yet fully organized. Beauregard believes if Sumter were well-defended, it could withstand continuous attacks. He stresses the importance of time to ready his forces. The local planters, driven by a sense of duty, offer their enslaved workers to assist in fortifying the defenses, mitigating some immediate challenges. However, there remains a precarious tension that risks igniting conflict at any moment given the inexperience of the forces involved.