

# Subterfuge

In "Subterfuge," Major Anderson embarks on a strategic plan to occupy Fort Sumter amid escalating tensions with South Carolina forces. Anderson, recognizing the imminent threat of an attack on Fort Sumter, instructs his officers to evacuate the families of twenty women and twenty-five children from Fort Moultrie to Fort Johnson, portraying the move as a precautionary measure. He charts three schooners under the pretext of ensuring their safety, but his intention is to mislead observers while secretly planning to fortify Sumter.

Anderson's clever ruse involves instructing Engineer Foster to disable the artillery at Fort Sumter, convincing others that preparations were in place for defense at Fort Moultrie. This tactic is designed to maintain the façade of staying put at Moultrie, even as he secretly plans for a transfer of troops. When rain delays the operation, Anderson continues to fabricate the safety of Moultrie by keeping ample supplies there while packing everything else for the supposed evacuation.

On December 26, Anderson provides instructions for a covert transfer of the garrison to Sumter, ensuring that Quartermaster Hall waits in the bay once the families are loaded, ready to set sail upon hearing cannon fire from Moultrie. When preparations are complete, two companies of soldiers, under Captain Doubleday and others, are roped into this clandestine operation.

The transfer unfolds amid tension; the garrison's rowboats navigate the channel with growing unease. Captain Doubleday's boat encounters a patrol steamer, heightening anxieties of being discovered. However, relief washes over them when the patrol steamer continues on its path, allowing their boats to reach Sumter safely.

Once there, the soldiers are met with confusion; workers within the fort are hostile, and Doubleday must quickly assert control to ensure his men establish a stronghold. As the operation's success sinks in, Anderson promptly communicates with his family and superiors, emphasizing the fort's strategic importance while remaining acutely aware of the dangers looming over Sumter. Meanwhile, Captain Foster races against time to secure remaining supplies from Moultrie as smoke signals impending conflict.

By morning, Charleston's citizens awaken to the unsettling sights of Fort Moultrie's flag absent and plumes of smoke rising, heralding the change that had transpired overnight, reflecting the fracture between Union and Confederate forces. Anderson's careful planning results in the successful transfer of his command, setting the stage for heightened unrest.