

Robert Anderson was my mother's great uncle. He was born at "Soldiers Retreat" outside of Louisville, Kentucky in 1805. His father, Richard Clough Anderson was Lafayette's aid-de-camp in the Revolutionary War.

After graduating from West Point in 1825, Anderson saw his first action as a volunteer colonel in the Black Hawk War where he mustered Abraham Lincoln in and out the army. In 1847 he was severely wounded in the Mexican American War, but returned to active duty in 1849 and was garrisoned at Fort Preble, Maine until 1853. He received a permanent promotion to Major in 1857.

In 1861 he was sent to South Carolina. He was a staunch Unionist even though he was a former slave holder from a slave state. When he was fired on as commander of Fort Sumter, he fired back. When the fort fell on April 14th, he took the Union flag to Manhattan New York, where 1000,000 people celebrated him as a national hero. He was soon after promoted to Brigadier General and toured the north recruiting for the army. After serving as commander of the union forces in Kentucky he retired from the army in 1863 citing health issues.

In 1865 Robert Anderson once again put on his uniform and returned to Fort Sumter with the 33 star flag he had taken down in 1861. He raised the flag again on April 14th. Several hours later Abraham Lincoln was assassinated.

Robert Anderson died at age 66 in Nice France while seeking a cure for his ailments.

His body was returned to the U.S. and buried at West Point.