

## Chapter 303 – Florida Threatens To Seize Ft. Pickens



**Dates:**  
January 10-14, 1860

**Sections:**  
• Tensions Mount At Ft. Pickens In Pensacola Florida

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### Tensions Mount At Ft. Pickens In Pensacola Florida



Adam Slemmer (1828-1868)

Florida's vote to secede on January 11, 1861 prompts its Governor, Madison Perry, to ramp up his threats to take-over federal property, most notably Ft. Pickens, located on a small island south of the city of Pensacola, in the far western end of the panhandle.

The fort is in sorry shape, with only a token garrison under the command of 32 year old Lt. Adam Slemmer.

Slemmer hears rumors of impending hostilities as early as January 7, and begins to organize his defenses.

On January 12, militia troops arrive in Pensacola and take over the naval shipyard there, along with some 36 marines.

Like Major Anderson at Ft. Sumter, Lt. Slemmer is left on his own to decide what to do next.

A demand to surrender the fort comes on January 15, and the next day Slemmer signals his refusal and prepares for a fight.

What saves him at the moment is the call for restraint Governor Perry receives from the new CSA government.

*We think no assault should be made. The possession of the fort is not worth one drop of blood to us. Measures pending unite us in this opinion. Bloodshed now may be fatal to our cause.*