

ISAAC RIDGEWAY TRIMBLE



ISAAC RIDGEWAY TRIMBLE, MAJOR GENERAL C.S.A.

In 1861, after the Pratt Street Riot in Baltimore and the first shots were fired at Ft. Sumter in Charleston Harbor, Isaac Ridgeway Trimble had to make a choice. He had lived in Maryland for most of his life, but because he was born in Virginia and aware of the federal government's plans to invade the South, Trimble decided to cross the Potomac River and join the army of the Confederate States of America. At the time, he was chief engineer of the Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad and, before he left Maryland, he damaged some of the railroad bridges leading from the north to Washington in an attempt to prevent federal troops from reaching the national capital.

After he joined the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia, Trimble was given many opportunities to use his skills in the Civil War.. Because he was a graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point, he was an excellent officer. And because of his civilian career as an engineer, he was also an expert on roads, bridges, and railways.

By 1863, Trimble was a Major General in the Army of Northern Virginia, and the highest ranking Marylander in the Confederacy. When Robert E. Lee led his army into Pennsylvania in June of 1863, Trimble was in command of a brigade of about fifteen hundred men. But because General Dorsey Pender was wounded on the second day of the Battle of Gettysburg, Trimble took command of Pender's division of four thousand men in time to take part in Pickett's Charge on July 3, 1863.

General Trimble was badly wounded and captured by the Union army at Gettysburg. He survived the war, however, and when it was over, returned to Baltimore and his civilian career as an engineer.