

CHARLES MINNIGERODE



My name is Charles Minnigerode, and I was born in 1845 in Williamsburg, Virginia. I deeply love Virginia, just like my father. He was born in Germany, but he liked America's religious freedoms so much that he moved to Virginia to become a minister. My father's church in Richmond had both Robert E. Lee, the head of the Confederate army, and Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederacy, as members. When war came to Virginia, I knew I had to defend her. So, in 1862, when I was only 16, I ran away to join the Confederate army. My mother was very worried about me, but I wrote her lots of letters while I was away. I worked my way up to be a staff officer for a general in the Confederate cavalry. I was at the general's side on April 9, 1865, when something terrible happened to me! That day we were on the battlefield near the village of Appomattox Court House, we were fighting pretty hard. Suddenly, we heard orders to stop fighting. We started to ride away from the battlefield to avoid surrendering, but I was shot in the back! Hitting my head on the ground, I realized I had fallen from my horse. Everyone gathered around me with tears in their eyes. They knew there was nothing that they could do for me, as I was told I would die from my wounds. They left me and rode off. I was writing my mother a goodbye letter when I was found by a Union surgeon. He bandaged me up and took me to a Union hospital. Everyone there was so kind to me, but as I laid in my hospital bed, there were so many things that I was unsure of. What would happen to me now that we had lost? What would my country look like? Would Confederate soldiers like me be considered citizens again? What about all my friends who fought with me? Would they be remembered and honored? Would the South and her people still be respected?

Questions:

1. How old was Minnigerode when he enlisted, and why did he join the Confederate army?
2. How was Minnigerode involved in the battle of Appomattox Court House?
3. Who saved Minnigerode?
4. What are some things that Minnigerode worries about that might be the **same** as a Union soldier, or an enslaved person?
5. What are some things that Minnigerode worries about that might be **different** from a Union soldier, or an enslaved person?