



James City Cavalry

PICKET LINES



Special Edition – Williamsburg, Virginia – <http://www.jamescitycavalry.org>

Camp #2095 1st Brigade Virginia Division Army of Northern Virginia

A PATRIOTIC HONOR SOCIETY DEDICATED TO SERVICE AND PRESERVING THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES

PICTORIAL
of the
MEMORIAL SERVICE
and
GRAVESTONE DEDICATION
in honor of

BRIDGET M. GRIMES

“The Forgotten Victim of the Brown’s Island Disaster”

With the Schwartz-Grimes family of Richmond, Virginia
in honoring the life and sacrifice of their young Irish Ancestor,
Bridget M. Grimes, who perished ten days following the disaster at the
Confederate States Laboratory on Brown’s Island, March 13th, 1863.

Saturday, June 7th, 2014

**Mount Calvary Cemetery
1400 South Randolph Street
Richmond, Virginia**



Miss. Bridget M. Grimes

Employee – Dept. #6 – C. S. Laboratory, Brown's Island
Richmond, Virginia

Bridget M. Grimes was born in 1849 in Roundstone, County Galway, on the west coast of Ireland. She was the youngest daughter of Mortimer Grimes and Barbara Grimes (King). In 1860 her mother, Barbara Grimes and sister Elizabeth were servants living with the Royster family of the Royster & Brothers Tobacco Company. Barbara and three daughter immigrated sometime during the 1850s. The family lived in a residence on 7th and Cary Street in downtown Richmond.

At age 14 Bridget, along with many other young girls and young boys, was employed in Department # 6 of the Confederate States Laboratory on Brown's Island. The laboratory was responsible for the manufacture of both breech-loading and pistol ammunition. The facility was located on the island, in the James River, for safety reasons.

On March 13, 1863 a huge explosion tore half of the 100' long building down. "*Operatives were killed, wounded, thrown into the air or upon the floor.*" A huge fire engulfed the scene. The initial death toll was 31 women and 2 men with an additional 25 women and 5 men wounded. Many of the wounded were badly burned. The *Richmond Enquirer* noted that "*some of the unfortunate girls were burnt from head to foot, others were burned in the face and eyes; some had an arm or leg divested of flesh and skin, others were bleeding with wounds received from the falling timbers and violent concussions . . .*" The dreadfully burned, including Bridget, were taken to General Hospital #2 on the corner of Cary and 7th streets.

Bridget died on March 23rd after eleven days of suffering. Her obituary in the *Richmond Dispatch* recorded that, "*Bridget M. Grimes died on Monday the 23rd, at Hospital #2 of burns received at the explosion of the Laboratory, Bridget M. daughter of Mrs. Barbara Grimes in her 14th year.*"

In the death of this young girl, her circles of friends have lost a bright ornament. She was gifted with beauty of body and mind and possessed of a loving disposition, which won her the devotion of an immense number of friends. During the eleven long days of her excruciating suffering her priest and doctor were untiring in attention. She died in implicit faith in the Holy Catholic Church. Her friends and the family are invited to attend her funeral this (Tuesday) afternoon, at 3 o'clock from her mother's residence on Cary near 7th street."

Bridget is buried in the same unmarked grave with her mother, Barbara, who passed in 1877, at Mount Calvary cemetery in Richmond. Bridget's tragic death has yet to be recognized by those that have memorialized the other young victims of this tragic event. After 150 years, Bridget and her sacrifice to the cause will no longer be forgotten.

(Family history provided by Richard Gordon Schwartz regarding his great-great aunt. *Richmond Enquirer* of March 14, 1863, *Richmond Daily Dispatch* of March 16, 1863, *Richmond Sentinel* of March 16, 1863 and *Richmond Dispatch* of March 24, 1863.)



Mr. Shane Carroll
opened the ceremony with a
Viola Prelude of the theme
from “Braveheart”



Compatriot Richard Schwartz
welcomed his fellow Grimes-
King family members &
assembled guests to the service



The Captain William Latane SCV Camp 1690 Color Guard moving into position to begin the formal ceremony. A 'young girl' emblematic of Bridget Grimes marches with the Color Guard.



Chaplain Fred Breeden of the James City Cavalry SCV Camp 2095 opens with a prayer and then reminds the gathering that ***"this young woman, putting her life on the line, suffered all, sacrificed all, dared all. This is her resting place, her eternal sleep as she rests under this Hallowed Ground."***



Mr. David Kolmer provides a moving rendition of *"Flowers of the Forest"*.



Miss Hailey Pickens, representing the family, reads the Bridget Grimes obituary.

Chaplain Breeden gave a short prayer and then, using the words of Rev. Dr. Randolph McKim, lead the entire gathering in voicing, *"Not for fame or fortune, not for place or rank, not lured by ambition, or goaded by necessity, but in simple obedience to duty as she understood it, this young woman suffered all, sacrificed all, dared all, and died."*





Color Guard
Salute



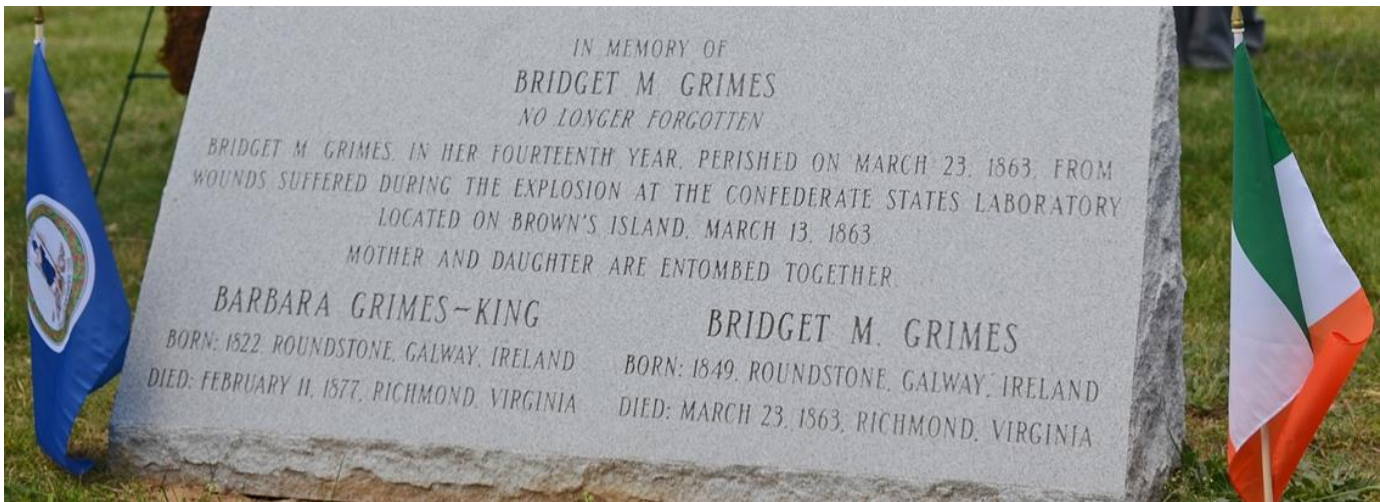
Laying of wreaths
& flowers



Miss Madison Lewis leaves the crowd in tears as she sings the opening stanza of "Amazing Grace". As Madison's voice fades away, Mr. David Kolmer continues the song with his bagpipes.



The Captain William Latane SCV Camp 1690 Color Guard folding the banners post-ceremony.



Mother and daughter together forever.



**The U.D.C. Brown's Island Monument at Oakwood Cemetery with Bridget's name added in 2014.
A U.D.C. Ceremony is scheduled for August 10th, 2014.**



**Ed Engle (James City Cavalry)
with John Sharrett (Stonewall
SCV Camp 380).**



**Mrs. Mary Vial (Gen. Stuart
Chapter 2195 U.D.C.) & John
Sharrett (Stonewall SCV Camp).**



**Some of the James City Cavalry SCV Camp 2095 Compatriots:
Richard Schwartz, David Beish, Chaplain Fred Breeden, Ray Adams,
Commander Jeff Toalson, and Adjutant Ken Parsons.**



The family of Bridget Grimes and the James City Cavalry were honored by the attendance of over 200 individuals to pay a long-overdue tribute to this young Southern woman.



The James City Cavalry Camp #2095
Sons of Confederate Veterans
gratefully wishes to thank

Theresa Schwartz

John Sharrett

and Jan Toalson

for their gracious submission of photographs
for this special issue of 'Picket Lines.'

