

The Story of the #3416 Barbara Fritchie Stems



Barbara Fritchie is the title of a poem by John Greenleaf Whittier about a Civil War incident at Frederick, MD. Per the poem, Barbara was a 90 year old woman who defied the rebel forces by flying the union flag in her attic window as the rebels marched toward Frederick. Stonewall Jackson's men tried to shoot it down. That led to the most famous line in the poem,

**'Shoot, if you must, this old gray head,
But spare your country's flag,' she said.**

Why did Heisey name a stemware line after her? You will recall in Heisey history that A. H. Heisey was a Captain in the Union army (his regiment's color company was also known as the Zouaves ergo the name Zouave assigned to Heisey etch # 394 but that's another story). It was only natural that a Heisey pattern would be named after such a brave lady sympathetic to the Union cause. (Ironically, you will note that either the Heisey Co. or Heisey book researchers misspelled Barbara's last name -- it is Frietchie in the poem and Fritchie in all the Heisey publications.

Also, historians say Barbara's confrontation with Jackson's men likely never occurred and that Mr. Whittier took considerable literary license).

Barbara Frietchie was born at Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Her maiden name was Hauer. She was born December 3, 1766, her parents being Nicholas and Catharine Hauer. She went to Frederick in early life, where she married John C. Frietchie, a glover, in 1806. She died December 18th, 1862, Mr. Frietchie having died in 1849.