

# Trestleboard

VOLUME 12 ISSUE 3

September 2014

*NJ Lodge of Masonic Research and Education's purpose is to foster the education of the Craft at large through prepared research and open discussion of the topics concerning Masonic history, symbolism, philosophy, and current events.*

## **Next Communication**

New Jersey Lodge of Masonic Research and Education meets on the second Saturday in March, June, September and December. Our next communication will be held on **Saturday, October 11, 2014 at 9:30 a.m. at:**

**Hightstown/Apollo Lodge #41  
535 North Main Street  
Hightstown, NJ 08520**

*All Master Masons are Welcome!*



## From the East

JR Avanti, Worshipful Master

### LION'S HEART

The Holy Land, 1189 to 1193

The Palestines were disintegrating in the autumn of 1187 and those Templars whose lands had been overtaken were congregating in Tyre. Brother Terric was among them. He had written to King Henry II stating he was Preceptor of the Temple in Jerusalem and, during the imprisonment of Gerard de Ridefort, took charge of the Order.

While in Tyre he co-operated with Conrad de Montferrat, de facto King of Jerusalem, witnessing legal documents, arranging the city's defense, and writing appeals to the West. Conrad and Terric seemed to work well together, no criticism of one to other has survived. This situation Conrad and Terric found themselves in obvious demand co-operation, but the good relationship did not last. Early in 1188, Gerard de Ridefort returned to impose his will on the Templars once more. He had been liberated after ordering his brethren at Gaza to surrender their castle to Saladin. In July, Guy De Lusignan was released by Saladin.



Gerard de Ridefort

Afterwards Conrad wrote to the Archbishop of Canterbury, his letter shows the effect that Guy de Lusignan and Gerard de Ridefort were involved at that time. Conrad wrote, "You know what it has cost me to defend the Christian in Tyre; and because I strive to maintain them there, I am being attacked by de

### LODGE HAPPENINGS...

NJ LORE No. 1786's next meeting will be held at the Hightstown-Apollo Lodge #41 on Saturday, October 11, at 9:30 a.m.

On the Agenda:

- Short Business Meeting
- Taverns and Toasts: Masonic Drinking Songs Remembered — Bro. Martin Bogardus
- Knights Templar Part 2 — WB J.R. Avanti

Coffee and pastries will be served prior to lodge and lunch will be provided following. Hope to see you there!

Lusignan, the king with his barons and with the Master of the Temple: not content with slandering me and attacking my honor, they intercept the help so needed by me and what is worse is that de Ridefort has taken the alms of the king of England and refuses to pass them on to me”

This last comment was untrue for the Templars and spent all of their share of Henry’s alms in preparations for the Battle of Hattin and ransoms in Jerusalem. Although it very possible that Gerard de Ridefort may have presented, simply out of malice, those funds that existed and were being withheld. But the rest of the complaint was true; “The erstwhile king. Once a king, always a king”

Upon his release, Guy de Lusignan rode to Tyre to take control of what was left of his kingdom. However, Conrad knew he was doing better than Guy had ever done and he refused to give up his authority. To add insult, he refused to let Guy into the city. For a whole year the legal king had been unable to govern and without Conrad the entire kingdom would have been conquered. Conrad considered that Guy had lost his right to rule, the throne was a tabula rasa, an ‘blank slate’, waiting for Conrad’s name to be written upon it. There was enough reason in this concept to revive an old rivalry; Reynald de Chatillon’s bones lay at Hattin and Raymond of Tripoli was dead, reputedly of shame, but the Templars, led by de Ridefort, still supported Guy and the Tyrians by then were content with Conrad.

To them it seemed Guy had never been a lucky king and the split was made worse by the rumors that de Ridefort had promised Saladin that he would embrace Islam. With the city gates closed in his face Guy did not stay long. After wintering in Tripoli, he returned to Tyre in the spring of 1189 and renewed his demands. Ignored and rejected just as before, he pitched camp outside the city walls.

About the same time, a fleet of fifty-two ships arrived from Pisa, an important reinforcement for Conrad; his only other western help had been a contingent from Sicily the year before. Guy remained before the city for four useless months and then suddenly at the end of August he lost patience and left taking with him de Ridefort, the Templars, the Pissan fleet and the Sicilians. Blessed as a savior by some, cursed as a usurper by others, Conrad could do nothing but watch them go and write his bitter complaint.

Guy had decided to go to Acre. Like Tyre, it was built on a peninsula; unlike Tyre, it was held by Moslems. But with a large fleet to blockade the seaward entrance and an army to cover the land approach, Guy believed he could besiege and recapture the city.



Guy de Lusignan

## **Taverns and Toasts: Masonic Drinking Songs Remembered**

**Submitted by Bro. Martin Bogardus**

The relationship between Freemasonry and taverns is a long and lively tale filled with amazing stories, dramatic historical events, and fraternal drinking songs all washed down with a frothy tankard of ale. From the early verses of Masonic poet laureate Robert Burns to the bards of modern day, great men of our gentle craft have gathered together to sing. Thematically, these songs were influenced by the turbulent period beginning with the Protestant Reformation where men of different faiths and creeds raised their voices in song to the glory of the Great Architect and the mysteries of our fraternity.

Freemasonry offered a rare opportunity for these men of different social classes to come together and fellowship in a public place. Taverns made for an ideal location since churches weren't often receptive to men of other faiths and most churches also prohibited drinking within their sacred walls. Since both Masonry and taverns didn't discriminate on the basis of religion or social class, it made for an ideal venue. And after each meeting, these men would talk, drink and sing.

Yes, sing! Our Masonic forefathers loved to drink, laugh and sing! A gentle libation or two to better lubricate a dry, parched throat - Masonry is thirsty work, right? - mixed with a heaping helping of brotherly fellowship and camaraderie, produced an atmosphere convivial for song and a singularly masculine experience. Freemasonry's primary directive as an equalizing force between disparate members of class and caste resonates strongly in these songs. I will be explored during a presentation at our upcoming meeting. See you there!

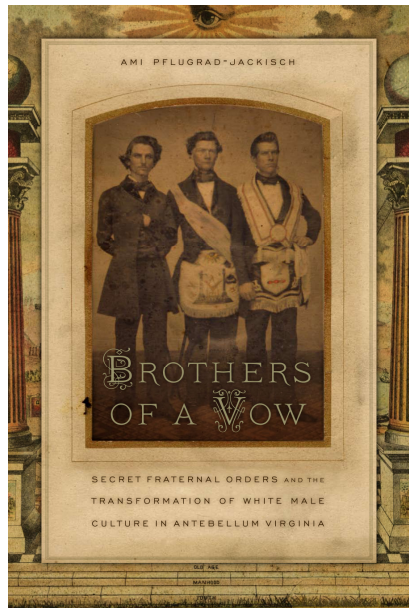
## **Book Review: Brothers Of A Vow**

**Submitted by Bro. Jay Hochberg, PM NJ LORE**

In a concise history, researcher Dr. Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch, History Department Chair of University of Michigan-Flint, illustrates what it meant to be a member of an exclusive fraternal order in Virginia during the decades leading to the Civil War, a period of great socio-economic and political change that recast white masculine identity in the South's largest slave-based economy. By delving into membership records of Freemasonry, Odd Fellows, and Sons of Temperance, as well as historical archives and news accounts of the Old Dominion in the early nineteenth century, the author shows how fraternal life within the lodge and daily life without dramatically influenced each other, giving rise to a civil society striving for modernity. *Brothers of a Vow* is presented in three parts. First comes the context of white male society in antebellum Virginia. It's not what you may think. Economic opportunity, civil rights, and advantageous social status were enjoyed nearly exclusively by the propertied, wealthy elites. Secondly, she assesses the force that fraternities there exerted in society by imparting their

values and conferring measures of status on their members. The secret societies created a reality wherein one's character and conduct could win him a better life, infusing momentum into the parchment promises of all men being equal. In the third act, Pflugrad-Jackisch reconciles those two dynamics to show the emergence in the 1850s of a new Virginia driven by increased prosperity and liberalized civil rights, and a return to the public square of fraternal orders' proud brethren. The significance of her findings is impressive and tragic, since the reader knows of the disaster looming in the ensuing decade.

Antebellum Virginia's socio-economic transition is key to the story. "If Virginia had remained a primarily agrarian society throughout the antebellum era," the author postulates, "perhaps the herrenvolk democracy [government by ethnic/racial majority] that proslavery advocates envisioned would have fostered harmony among white men. During the 1840s, however, the state underwent a series of important social, economic, and political transformations that altered the nature of its society, hastened its transition to a market economy, and engendered the growth of towns and cities." During the 1830s, about 80 percent of white, male Virginians were employed in agriculture, but change, driven by construction of roads, canals, railways, and other infrastructure, created a new economy. Virginia's cities became interconnected, and trade with Washington, Philadelphia, and Baltimore became common for merchants. Communications with cities further north was inevitable. Upward mobility allowed some artisans and mechanics to quickly improve their standings by becoming shopkeepers and factory owners. The middle class. "Between 1830 and 1850, urban centers across the state expanded, and the free white populations of Richmond and Petersburg doubled as young white male cabinetmakers, carriage makers, blacksmiths, hatters, and other artisans moved to cities in order to fulfill the growing needs of middle-class consumers. Work for skilled tradesmen abounded in urban areas as new warehouses, marketplaces, and other physical structures had to be constructed to keep pace with the new market economy in Virginia. Skilled white laborers also found work in small factories, flour mills, and iron foundries, and as overseers in tobacco factories, while a new class of merchants, shopkeepers, agents, clerks, and other businessmen grew up around the state's expanding commercial sector." These rootless strangers were compelled to make their own identities in ways as virtuous as possible. A man's word was his bond in personal and commercial matters, making his cultivation of reputation essential for success anywhere. The lodge, Masonic or other, was a force for ensuring the quality



of men. This quality control paid dividends, as lodge brothers, without necessarily knowing each other, were confident in one another's stability and reliability because their fraternal orders were based on equality and merit. Simultaneously, in the fraternities' interactions with the public, it was made clear that the selective nature of lodge membership meant that lodge members constituted a choice stratum of society. In the new Virginia, it was lodge, not land, that placed value on upwardly mobile white males, and it was an identity many men craved.

With this new society on the rise, it would not be possible for public laws to remain as established in the original Virginia of the early American republic and previously. The right to vote was held by those who owned land, called freeholders. But, "by creating a network of white neighborhoods, the fraternities constructed a space outside the political arena where white men could envision an alternative definition of white male independence based on men's moral conduct rather than on the ownership of land or slaves." The status quo in 1829 denied suffrage to white men universally because men who worked for a living "were comparable to slaves" in that both groups were "subject to the will of others for their own subsistence." The "peasantry" could not be entrusted with political affairs. "By 1849, the calls for a new state constitution had become deafening" and the legislators of Virginia soon elected to extend suffrage to "every white male citizen of the Commonwealth of the age of twenty-one years." The meritocracy of the lodge, where leaders were elected according to their abilities and virtues (and where discussion of partisan politics was forbidden), had been translated into basic rights for white men in their cities and towns.

This reviewer has been saying for years that some of the best books investigating Freemasonry have come from scholars outside the fraternity, and Ami Pflugrad-Jackisch's very thoughtful analysis of antebellum Virginia is among the best even though Masonry is not its sole focus.

*This book review appears courtesy of The Working Tools magazine, where a lengthier version is found in the August 2014 issue.*



December marks the end of the current two year NJ LORE cycle. We need members to step up and fill the seats for the 2015-2016 term.

If you are interested in serving as an officer of NJ LORE for the next two years, please see Bro. David Tucker at our next meeting.

## Officers for 2013-2014

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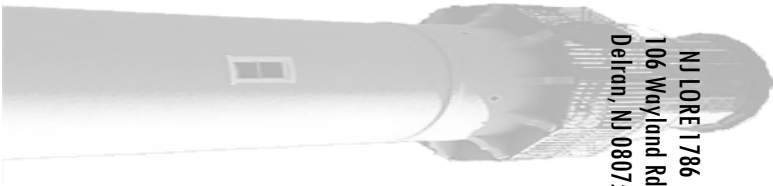
### *From the Editor's Desk.....*

*The next Trestleboard will be published on or about December 1, 2014. We are always looking for articles. All articles must be submitted by November 15, 2014.*

*Matthew Korang, Secretary*  
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*Bringing Light to New  
Jersey Freemasonry!*

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