

scarce, and commanded a high price in the markets of the country, yet on the personal application of General Washington, Mr. Israel supplied the American forces with fifty large beehives, contenting himself with a plain commissary's receipt, instead of the hard money. The war drew further and further south. Philadelphia was occupied by the British, and the surrounding country was daily ravaged for their sustenance. While the dark cloud yet rested over the patriot's prospects, the *Roebeck*, frigate, anchored in the Delaware, not far from Mr. Israel's house, and a detachment was sent ashore to secure that gentlemen, and appropriate his cattle. Mr. Israel was easily taken, for he rather put himself in the way of the party, thinking no further evil than that his property would be subject to a heavy draft. Much to his surprise, the soldiers seized him, bound his hands, and sent him on board the frigate, to be tried by court-martial that very day! All this happened in plain sight of his wife, who stood in the doorway; and no sooner did it pass, than she instantly divined that mischief was brewing. To prevent the capture of the stock, she hurried to the yard, turned all the cattle out, and set the dog after them. He soon ran them out deep into the woods. The horses in the stable were liberated in the same manner. By this time the detachment came up, and seeing her purpose, they fired their muskets at her, but without effect.

Some harsh language was used, but the English officer soon came up and ordered his men away, having received no instructions to damage the property, and the strong-hearted woman was left to rock her babies and ponder upon the fate of her husband, then in so dangerous a condition. Mr. Israel was taken on board the frigate, and while the officers busied about the final disposition to be made of him, one of the sailors approached him, and in a low tone inquired: "Harkee, friend, ain't ye a Freemason?" What prompted the question in the man's mouth cannot be known; but the reader will presently perceive that Mr. Israel's life was involved in the answer. Startled by the inquiry, but feeling new heart at the very word Mason, Mr. Israel whispered in reply that he was. "Then," pursued the sailor, hastily, for an officer was approaching to order the prisoner below, "you had better tell it, for the officers will hold a lodge in the cabin to-night."

A very few hours sufficed to prepare an indictment, summon officers enough for a court-martial, and commence proceedings. Mr. Israel was led across from the fore-castle to the cabin, where a speedy trial and a short shrift were in store for the rebel. And the rebel took a glance across the still water to his pretty homestead, which he felt was not long to claim him as proprietor. The trial was a mere formality. Witnesses testified to anything that was desired of them. The Judge-Advocate evidently felt that the whole matter was beneath him; he asked but a few questions, and those in a careless manner. One witness, as a crowning point to his testimony, averred that when Lord Howe sent to purchase his cattle with specie, that rebellious individual returned for answer, "that he would rather give his cattle to Washington, than to receive thousands of British gold!"

"What have you to say, in plea, prisoner?" inquired the senior officer, in the same breath giving a low order to the sergeant which hurried him on deck, where the rattling of a block, fixed to a yard-arm, could be distinctly heard. The rattling ceased. A file of marines marched across the deck. Something there was, awful, in this, and Mr. Israel's lips paled as he answered. He made a manly defence, averring his devotion to his country's cause, and maintaining his entire innocence of ever having committed any crime which could merit such hard treatment. He was a plain man; loved his country; loved his home; thought no harm to any one; and hoped the court would not deprive an innocent man of his life in the very presence of his family and home.

At the conclusion of his last remark, he gave the sign of the Brotherhood. A hasty whisper passed among the judges; an evident interest took the place of their former listlessness. Their haughty bearing was changed: the senior officer ordered the Judge-Advocate to recall the witnesses. This being done, the members of the court cross-examined them searchingly. It was not difficult now to sift out of their evidence so much malice and envy, that the senior officer dismissed them with a stern rebuke, "for seeking to hurt so honorable a man as Mr. Israel!" The verdict was a unanimous *not guilty*. The court being dismissed, Mr. Israel was sent on shore in the captain's barge, and a handsome present sent to his heroic wife, whose coolness in defending her husband's property had been reported to the officers.

So long as the frigate kept her anchorage, there were numerous exhibitions of friendship on the part of her officers, and Mr. Israel made frequent visits to the ship where he had been so lately a prisoner, but where he was now hailed as a brother. It is needless to add, no evil of any description was ever inflicted on the fortunate man. The records of Pennsylvania show that Israel Israel was for many years Grand Master of the State.—*Kentucky Freemason*.