

**T.F.S.**  
**Three, five, and seven**  
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**“The whole art of teaching is only the art of awakening the natural curiosity of young minds for the purpose of satisfying it afterwards.”** Anatole France

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**“I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy godmother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift would be Curiosity.”** Eleanor Roosevelt

One of the joys of attending one of my favorite Masonic Lodges is to be able to converse with Worshipful Brother Peter Kloskowski, as luck would have it Brother Pete and I see each other at other Masonic functions as well. He is a very active and knowledgeable man and Mason.

I had the good fortune to sit next to him at an awards dinner at North Star Lodge #23 in St. Cloud recently, and we had a fine talk on Freemasonry along with a very good supper. I always learn something interesting when I can visit with Brother Pete. One of the things he told me about was Brother Jacob Brower, an early member of North Star and a significant person in history. I also learned that Brother Pete wrote a paper on him, which can be read at the Minnesota Historical Society, and is readily available at the Stearns County Historical Society located in St. Cloud, MN. He also said it had been printed in The Philalethes magazine in 1993. That made finding it quite easy.

His paper was included in the April 1993 issue of The Philalethes, and I'm reproducing it here for your enjoyment and knowledge, and with the permission of W.B. Peter P. Kloskowski and with the blanket permission of The Philalethes Society by telling you it was published by The Philalethes. I will add that The Philalethes still has some CD Rom disks available, (at least I think they do,) for \$100, (again I think that's the price,) and well worth it. This CD Rom covers 50 years of The Philalethes Magazine and all the articles in all those issues. Talk about rolling back the clock; 50 years of The Philalethes, the official publication of the Premiere Masonic Research Society in North America, for \$2 a year. I don't think the subscription was ever that low, even when it 1<sup>st</sup> began. You can contact The Philalethes to see about buying a CD at [www.freemasonry.org](http://www.freemasonry.org) if you can get one of these CD's you'll have a valuable research and study tool. Now for Brother Pete's article – Enjoy!

**A Tribute to a Special Brother Jacob V. Brower**  
by Peter P. Kloskowski, PM

Some time ago, the phone rang, and a friend of many years said, "I know you belong to the Masonic Lodge, and I am looking for some information about a man who also was a Mason, and at one time belonged to your Lodge." "What is his name? Maybe I can help," I replied. "Well here's the deal, he's dead, but we want to know if he was a Civil War veteran, as he is buried in an unmarked grave in North Star Cemetery, here in St. Cloud, and hopefully we could get financial assistance from the Veterans Administration toward the cost of a monument for him." "Well, " I responded, "I'll see what I can find out; it will take me a few days."

After a few hours spent searching the archives of the Lodge, I came up with the right name, and some other interesting information. Armed with the above, and some help from my friend, I went to the Stearns County Historical Society, and with their help, and a lot of digging, the gaps were eventually filled in.

The man was Jacob Vrandenberg Brower. He was born on a cold January 21, 1844, in York Township, Washtenaw County, Michigan, to Abraham D. and Mary (Stevens) Brower. The ancestors of the Browsers immigrated from Holland where the name was spelled "Brouwer," but when arriving in New Amsterdam, New York in 1642, it was changed to "Brower." In May of 1860

the Brower family moved to Todd County, Minnesota, and settled on a farm in Round Prairie Township, a few miles south of Long Prairie. After a limited education in the area district school, Jacob continued his education with tutoring from his father, Abraham, who was highly educated.

At the young age of 17, Brower became a teacher, and although his education continued, the Sioux Indian uprising and the Civil War intervened.

At the age of 18, on October 16, 1862, Brower enlisted in Company "D" of the First Regiment of Mounted Rangers, Minnesota Volunteers, and during the uprising was in the battles of Big Mound July 24, 1863, Dead Buffalo Lake, July 26, Stony Lake July 28, and Apple Creek July 29. The Company was mustered out, and he was discharged in November of 1863.

He then worked for the U. S. Government for a short time as a civilian employee at Duval's Bluff, Arkansas.

He then enlisted in the Navy, where he served on the ironclad ship "Exchange," a steamer that patrolled the lower Mississippi River. This ship was part of the "Mosquito Fleet" in which Admiral Farragut also served. He was discharged in August, 1865.

Returning to Long Prairie after his discharge, Brower became the first auditor of Todd County, and served from 1867 until 1871. In 1867 he met and married his wife, Armina Shava. She died at the age of 59, and is buried in the family plot at North Star Cemetery.

In 1873 Brower was admitted to the Bar, having already served in the Minnesota Legislature as representative from the 41st District, as Todd County attorney, and for a short time as County Superintendent of Schools. In 1873 he moved to St. Cloud, where he was appointed register of the U. S. Land Office, a position which he held until 1879.

Jacob and Armina had two children, Ripley and Josephine.

Ripley P. Brower was a prominent attorney in St. Cloud, and also a member of North Star Masonic Lodge there. Josephine was a member of the faculty of St. Cloud Normal School, now St. Cloud University. She was made an Honorary Member of the Women's Club in Minneapolis, a very exclusive women's club. She also wrote a book on art, and another called "English Modes of Folk Dancing," a subject that she was very interested in.

Jacob V. Brower was a member of North Star Masonic Lodge in St. Cloud, and served as Senior Warden in 1877. In 1880 he became the editor of The Stearns Tribune in Sauk Center and was commissioned to build a railroad from Sauk Center to Perham via Long Prairie. The railroad was named the Sauk Center Northern Railway. J. V. Brower was its first president. It was later purchased by "The Empire Builder," James J. Hill, and incorporated into what was called the "K" Line, running from Sauk Center through Long Prairie, Browerville, Wadena, Park Rapids and Walker, to Cass Lake. Browerville, five miles north of Long Prairie, was named after Brower, and a plaque was dedicated in his honor in 1939.

Jacob was an accomplished land surveyor, topographer, geographer, archaeologist, writer, legislator, and public servant. In 1889, Jacob Brower was commissioned by the Minnesota Historical Society to "Examine, and survey the source of the Mississippi River." He mapped and surveyed the basin of Lake Itasca, and through his extensive notes, proved that Lake Itasca was truly the source of the Mississippi, and disproved Captain Willard Glazier's claim of Elk Lake as the source. He also mapped and surveyed the ultimate source of the Missouri River, and traced the route that Coronado took in 1541 in his exploration of what is now the southwestern part of the United States. For the next two years, he fought the lumber interests who were clear-cutting the northern Minnesota forests. On April 20, 1891, a bill was passed, and Itasca State Park and the Minnesota State Park system became a reality.

Without Brower's accomplishments the state park system in Minnesota would not be what it is today. He was the father of the park system, and the founder of Itasca State Park. He sacrificed many hours, and much of his wealth, to preserve Itasca Park for future generations. He was appointed the first commissioner of that park, serving in that position for the next four years. But

opposition from the lumbering interests was such that the legislature did not appropriate funds for his salary, and he was never paid.

During the time that Brower was editor of The Stearns Tribune at Sauk Center, a dispute arose over the ownership of the paper between Jacob Brower and W. C. Brower, and a lengthy lawsuit ensued, after which Jacob left, and became involved with one of the earliest newspapers in St. Cloud, the St. Cloud Tribune.

Jacob V. Brower wrote numerous books, theses, and monographs during his lifetime, including many about early Indians, and their customs, a subject that interested him immensely. Some of his most important were the following: The Mississippi and Its Sources (1893), The Missouri River and Its Utmost Sources (1896), Quiuira (1898), Exploration in the Basin of the Mississippi (1898-1904), Harahey (1899), Mille Lac (1900), Kathio (1901), Kakabikansing (1902), Kansas Monumental Perpetuation of Its Earliest History (1903), Minnesota Description of Its Area from 1540 to 1665 (1903), Mandan (1904) and Itasca State Park (1904). Many notes and manuscripts were lost in a fire in St. Paul.

Brower was truly a remarkable man, and literally went from the plow handle to a place of high position, trust, honor, and profit during his colorful lifetime. His picture appears on the current Minnesota State Park Sticker, which is used for admittance to the state parks in this centennial year.

Brother Jacob Vrandenberg Brower died on June 1st, 1905, and is buried in North Star Cemetery beside his wife, Armina. On June 8, 1991, a horse-drawn centennial train of covered wagons, with the participants dressed in Civil War attire, started from the Capitol Building in St. Paul, and made its way, after several stops en route, to St. Cloud. Where a historical marker was unveiled and dedicated at the gravesite of Brother Jacob Brower. It then proceeded to Itasca State Park, arriving there on June 23, to celebrate the centennial of the park. The dedication program at North Star Cemetery started off with a prayer given by the Centennial Wagon Train Minister. Many members of North Star Masonic Lodge #23, where Brother Jacob was once a member and served as Senior Warden, were in attendance to witness this historical moment. Several speeches were given from the podium, on the chapel steps. One of the most dynamic speakers at the dedication was Right Worshipful Brother Edward Waldon; Deputy Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota, A. F. & A. M. Richard Brower, a great-grandson of Brother Jacob Brower was then introduced. Mrs. Ripley Brower II (Mildred) was not able to attend because of her health. The entourage then proceeded north across the road, where a red pine was planted to honor this great humanitarian by Richard Brower, (great-grandson), Donald Moore, (great nephew) and his wife Lucille. Also assisting were Romauld, and Rachael Thibault, relatives of the Moores.

Following the tree ceremony, the group walked several hundred yards up the steep road to a well-kept, grassy knoll, where the five foot veiled historic monument stood out brightly in the afternoon sun. Beneath three large pine trees, swaying gently in the breeze, which Jacob's son, Ripley had planted many years before, were two stones, one of which read: "Jacob V. Brower 1844-1905, " with the Masonic emblem on the left, and the GAR [Grand Army of the Republic, a Union Veterans' association] emblem on the right, with the years 1861-1865 inscribed on it. The other read: "Armina E (Shava) 1845-1904. "

Richard Brower and Donald Moore unveiled the beautiful dark grey monument, crafted from St. Cloud Granite by Monumental Sales Craftsmen of St. Cloud. On the top was a picture of Jacob Brower, and at the bottom and left side were etchings of the pines and shores of the source of the Mississippi River, with a post that read: "Here 1475 feet above the ocean the mighty Mississippi begins to flow on its winding way 2552 miles to the Gulf of Mexico." In the center was inscribed, "Jacob V. Brower, Founder of Itasca State Park, and the Minnesota State Park System," and the other read, "The park will soon contain the only tract of standing pine within the borders of the state, and this forest reservation will become easily accessible and of great value as a public resort. " Richard Brower said a few words, and thanked the people for their generosity and participation. Charlie Maguire, the official centennial troubadour, played his guitar and sang "Itasca," while all in attendance joined in. As the last faint echo could be heard, the crowd, silently, and somberly dispersed. A beautiful epitaph for a great Minnesotan.

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Peter Boatman, Caretaker, North Star Cemetery.  
John Decker and Robert Lommell, Stearns County. Historical Society Staff.  
Romauld and Rachel Thibault.  
Personal observation at the complete Monument dedication program.

**“The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity.”** Ellen Parr

**Words to live by:** “Many people realize their hearts desires late in life. Continue learning, never stop striving and keep your curiosity sharp, and you will never become too old to appreciate life.”

Please remember: if you would like to participate in the latest Masonic Monday Question, please go to <http://www.lodgebuilder.org> and click on the Lodge Education forum. When you have an answer send it to [masonicmonday@gmail.com](mailto:masonicmonday@gmail.com) the Masonic Monday Question for the week of 11/02/09 is: **In Freemasonry what is the Rite of ‘induction,’ and what does it signify?**

**“A liberally educated person meets new ideas with curiosity and fascination. An illiberally educated person meets new ideas with fear.”** James B. Stockdale

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**“Satisfaction of one's curiosity is one of the greatest sources of happiness in life.”**  
**Linus Pauling**

The Education Committee of the Grand Lodge of Minnesota has its 1<sup>st</sup> Education Video produced; it can be viewed at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z30Gb98cIko&feature=autofb> If you want to do a search for the education videos of the G.L. of min, just type glmned into the search window of YouTube.

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With “Brotherly Love”,  
Ed Halpaus  
Grand Lodge Education Officer

**Seek to mentor a Brother Mason:  
It's good for him, it's good for you, and it's good for Freemasonry!**