

St. Catharines, Ontario

The

# Brock Broadcaster



**A newsletter for the Brethren of Brock Daylight Lodge No. 745, Niagara "A" District, All Members of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario and Beyond.**

Spring 2023

## SO MOTE IT BE

*The phrase appears in the Regius Poem. It is customary in contemporary English to end prayers with a hearty, "Amen", a wording "So Be It". It is a Latin word derived from the Hebrew Word.*

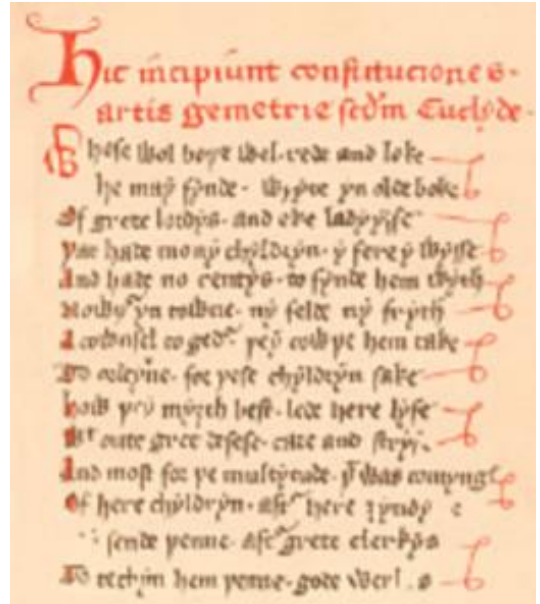
How familiar the phrase is.

No Lodge is ever opened or closed, in due form, without using it. Yet, how few know how old it is, much less what a deep meaning it has in it. Like so many old and lovely things, it is so near to us that we do not see it.

As far back as we can go in the annals of the Craft, we find this old phrase, Its form betrays its age.

The word 'mote' is an Anglo-Saxon word, derived from an anomalous verb, 'motan'. Chaucer uses the exact phrase in the same sense in which we use it, meaning 'So May It Be'. It is found in the Regius

Poem, the oldest document in the Craft, just as we use it today.



As everyone knows, it is the Masonic form of the ancient AMEN which echoes through the ages, gathering meaning and music as it goes until it is one of the richest and most haunting of words.

At first only a sign of assent, on the part of either an individual or of an assembly, to words of prayer or praise, it has become to stand as a sentinel at the gateway of silence.

When we have uttered all that we can utter, and our poor words seem like ripples on the bosom of the unspoken, somehow this familiar phrase gathers up all that is left-our dumb yearnings, our deepest longings-and bears them aloft to One who understands.

In some strange way it seems to speak for us into the very ear of God the things for which words were never made.

So, naturally, it has a place of honor among us. At the marriage Altar it speaks its blessing as young love walks toward the bliss or sorrow of hidden years.

It stands beside the cradle when we dedicate our little ones to the Holy life, mingling its benediction with our vows. At the grave side it utters its sad response to the shadowy AMEN which death pronounces over our friends.

When, in our turn, we see the end of the road, and would make a last will and testament, leaving our earnings and savings to those whom we love, the old legal phrase asks us to repeat after it: 'In the Name of God, AMEN'. And with us, as with Gerontius in his Dream, the last word we hear when the voices of earth grow faint and the silence of God covers us, is the old AMEN, So Mote It Be.

How impressively it echoes through the Book of Holy Law, We hear it in the Psalms, as chorus answers to chorus, where it is sometimes reduplicated for emphasis. In the talks of Jesus with his friends it has a striking use, hidden in the English version. The oft-repeated phrase, 'Verily, Verily I Say unto You,' if rightly translated means, AMEN, AMEN, I say unto you'. Later, in the Epistles of Paul, the word AMEN becomes the name of Christ, who is the AMEN of God to the faith of man.

So, too, in the Lodge, at opening, at closing, and in the hour of initiation. No Mason ever enters upon any great or important undertaking without invoking the aid of Deity. And he ends his prayer with the old phrase, 'So Mote It Be'. Which is another way of saying: 'The Will of God Be Done'. Or, whatever be the answer of God to his prayer: 'So Be It – because it is wise and right.

What, then, is the meaning of this old phrase, so interwoven with all our Masonic lore, simple, tender, haunting? It has two meanings for us everywhere, in the Church, or in the Lodge. First, it is assent of man to the way and Will of God; assent to His Commands; assent to His Providence, even when a tender, terrible stroke of death takes from us one much loved and leaves us forlorn. Still, somehow, we must say: So it is; so be it. He is a wise man, a brave man, who, baffled by the woes of life, when disaster follows fast and follows faster, can nevertheless accept his lot as a part of the Will of God and say, though it may almost choke him to say it: 'So Mote It Be'. It is not blind submission, nor dumb resignation, but a wise reconciliation to the Will of the Eternal.

The other meaning of the phrase is even more wonderful; it is the assent of God to the aspiration of man. Man can bear so much-anything, perhaps-if he feels that God knows, cares and feels for him and with him. If God says Amen, so it is, to our faith and hope and love; it links our perplexed meanings, and helps us to see, however dimly, or in a glass darkly, that there is a wise and good purpose in

life, despite its sorrow and suffering, and that we are not at the mercy of Fate or whim of Chance.

Does God speak to man, confirming his faith and hope? If so, how? Indeed yes! God is not the great I Was, but the great I Am, and He is neither deaf nor dumb. In Him, we live and move and have our being-He speaks to us in nature, in the moral law, and in our hearts, if we have ears to hear. But He speaks clearly in the Book of Holy Law which lies open upon our altar.

Nor is that all. Some of us hold that the Word of God 'Become Flesh and Dwelt Among Us, Full of Grace and Truth,' in a life the loveliest ever lived among men, showing us what life is, what it means, and to what fine issues it ascends when we do the Will of God on earth as it is done in Heaven, no one of us but grows wistful when he thinks of the life of Jesus, however far we fall below it.

Today men are asking the question: Does it do any good to pray? The man who actually prays does not ask such a question. As well ask if it does a bird any good to sing, or a flower to bloom? Prayer is natural and instinctive in man. We are made so. Man is made for prayer, as sparks ascending seek the sun. He would not need religious faith if the objects of it did not exist.

Are prayers ever answered? Yes, always, as Emerson taught us long ago. Who rises from prayer a better man, his prayer is answered-and that is as far as we need to go. The deepest desire, the ruling motive of a man, is his actual prayer, and it shapes his life after its form and color. In this sense all prayer is answered, and that is why we ought to be careful what we pray for-because in the end we always get it.

What, then is good of prayer? It makes us repose on the unknown with hope; it makes us ready for life. It is a recognition of laws and the thread of our conjunction with them. It is not the purpose of prayer to beg or make God do what we want done. Its purpose is to bring us to do the Will of God, which is greater and wiser than our will. It is not to use God, but to be used by Him in the service of His plan. Can man by prayer change the Will of God? No, and yes. True prayer does not wish or seek to change the larger will of God, which involves in its sweep and scope the duty and destiny of humanity. But it can and does change the Will of God concerning us, because it

changes our will and attitude towards him, which is the vital thing in prayer for us.

For example, if a man living a wicked life changes his way of living and his inner attitude, he changes the Will of God – if not his Will, at least his intention. That is, he attains what even the Divine Will could not give him and do for him unless it had been effected by his Will and Prayer.

The place of prayer in Masonry is not perfunctory. It is not a mere matter of form and rote. It is vital and profound. As a man enters the Lodge as an initiate, prayer is offered for him, to God, in whom he puts his trust. Later, in a crisis of his initiation, he must pray for himself, orally or mentally as his heart may elect. It is not just a ceremony; it is basic in the faith and spirit of Masonry. Still later, in a scene which no Mason ever forgets, when the shadow is darkest, and the most precious thing a Mason can desire or seek seems lost, in the perplexity and despair of the Lodge, prayer is offered.

As recorded in our Monitors, it is a mosaic of Bible words, in which the grim facts of life and death are set forth in stark reality, and appeal is made to the pity and light of God. It is truly a great prayer, to join in which is to place ourselves in the very hands of God, as all must do in the end, trust His Will and way, following where no path is into the soft and fascinating darkness which men call death. And the response of the Lodge to that prayer, as to all others offered at its Altar, is the old, challenging phrase, 'So Mote It Be!' Brother do not be ashamed to pray, as you are taught in the Lodge and the Church. It is a part of the sweetness and sanity of life, refreshing the soul and making clear the mind. There is more wisdom in a whispered prayer than in all libraries in the world. It is not our business to instruct God. He knows what things we have need for before we ask him. He does not need our prayer, but we do – if only to make us acquainted with the best Friend we have.

The greatest of all teachers of the soul left us a little liturgy called the Lord's Prayer. He told us to use it each for himself, in the closet when the door is shut, and the din and hum and litter of the world is outside. Try it Brother; it will sweeten life, make its load lighter, its joy brighter, and the way of duty plainer. Two tiny prayers have floated down to us from ages ago, which are worth remembering: one by a great Saint, the other by two brothers. 'Grant

Me, Lord. Ardently to desire, wisely to study, rightly to understand and perfectly to fulfill that which pleases Thee'.

## 'SO MOTE IT BE!'

<https://www.thesquaremagazine.com>



### **Question:**

What is the proper wording for the toast to Grand Lodge?

### **Answer:**

"The Grand Master and the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario".  
*Meeting the Challenge – page 109*

### **Question:**

When is the Sign of Fidelity used?

### **Answer:**

The Sign of Fidelity is used eight times throughout the course of Masonic meetings and gatherings.

1. When the Volume of the Sacred Law is being attended.
2. During obligations.
3. During prayers in ceremonies.
4. In the Masonic Memorial Service in the funeral home when the WM says, "Let us Pray".
5. By the SW when presenting a candidate.
6. When receiving the Grand Honors or when accompanying a Brother who is receiving them. (i.e. Director of Ceremonies)
7. As directed in the Installation Ceremony when the Master elect is assenting to the Ancient Charges.
8. In the closing when the Past Master says, "F.F.F. And May God Be With Us".

The Sign of Fidelity is not used by a Brother who can not stand or is otherwise physically unable to take part in giving the Grand Honors.

The Sign of Fidelity is not used when observing a "Moment of Silence" or at any other time during a Lodge meeting or in a perambulation procession. It is expected the Brethren will stand at attention or parade with their arms by their sides.

*P and E Essentials – Issue 6*





**Bro. Sheldon M Kofsky and Lady Judy**

*EFD photo*

On the evening of Saturday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, The Heritage Lodge No. 730 held its Annual Black-Tie Banquet at the Markham School of Fine Dining. Bro. Sheldon Kofsky, FCF, WMWM, received the MW Bro. William J Dunlop Award for his many years of dedication in providing and promoting Masonic education throughout the jurisdiction of our Grand Lodge. Members of BDL 745 in attendance to share in the celebration were Bro. Kyle Kofsky, Bro. Jason Oram and Lady Mandie, RW Bro. Tom Wills and Lady Valerie, RW Bro. Edward Dunsmore. Congratulations Sheldon!



## **JAMES E. HANGER** **And Modern Prosthetics**

The first amputation of the Civil War came at the hands of a 16<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry Regimental Surgeon who removed the leg of an 18-year-old college student from the Shenandoah Valley named James E. Hanger. The operation was conducted in a private home on June 3, 1861, in the western Virginia town of Philippi. Hanger had left the Washington College (now Washington and Lee College) to join a local cavalry unit in Philippi. Union soldiers from Ohio surprised the Confederates in early morning with two blasts of canister shot from cannon. Hanger ran into the stable for his horse and

was hit by the third volley, this time of solid six-pounders. One cannonball tore through the stable, ricocheted off a door post, and struck Hanger's left leg above the knee.

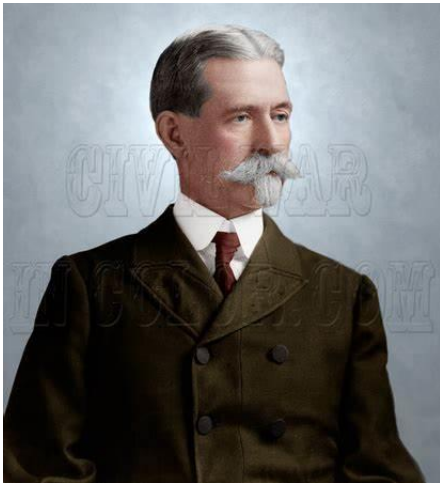
With the leg hanging by skin, Hanger crawled to a hayloft to hide from the Yankees. Soldiers quickly discovered him and carried him to Dr. James Robinson, a native of Wooster, Ohio. With a saw and chloroform, Robinson saved Hanger's life by removing his left leg seven inches below the hip. It

was the first of and an estimated fifty thousand (50,000) amputations performed during the Civil War.

Hanger convalesced as a POW until August, when he was swapped in a prisoner exchange. Returning home to Churchville, Virginia, Hanger used his crude peg leg to hobble upstairs to a dark bedroom. He was just 18 years old, and his life was over.

“No one can know what such a loss means unless he has suffered a similar catastrophe,” he later explained. “In the twinkling of an eye, life’s fondest hopes seemed dead. What could the world hold for a maimed crippled man?”

Secluded upstairs, Hanger entertained a modest ambition to improve his lot a bit by upgrading his peg leg. He began to design the leg he wanted, then adding little features, here and there. He wanted it to be comfortable, easy to take on and off, and of course, useful in walking as naturally as possible.



James E Hanger (Library of Congress)

Descending from the bedroom, Hanger collected oak barrel staves and metal straps, rubber bumpers and nails, and crafted a more life-like limb to replace the crude peg he’d been using. He tinkered further, adding hinges and joints. By fall, he had articulating knee and ankle joints, the first of their kinds. He called it “The Hanger Limb” and began selling them out of his brother’s store in nearby Staunton, Virginia. Sadly, in the wake of Bull Run, there was no shortage of customers.

In 1863, at age 20, Hanger patented his leg with the Confederate States Patent Office and

contracted with the Association for the Relief of Maimed Soldiers in Richmond to produce above-the-knee Hanger Limbs for \$200 each. After the surrender at Appomattox, Hanger opened a shop in Richmond, where he secured a big contract with Virginia to supply the state’s wounded veterans with prosthetic legs.

Hanger kept on tweaking and improving his device, which by the 1880’s became the world’s most desired artificial leg. It was lightweight, comfortable, well-functioning, and didn’t cost a fortune. His sons joined the business and help expand it throughout the United States. JE Hanger, Inc., invented and marketed a range of limbs, wheelchairs, beds, and other devices for the disabled. As the killing fields of World War 1 got active, James E Hanger, now 72 years old, traveled to Europe to help wounded French and British soldiers regain their mobility. Hanger would die in 1919, just after the Great War had produced another generation of men in need of artificial limbs.

Reflecting on his life, Hanger expressed the kind of wisdom we hear in so many of our veterans, the kind only gained through time and struggle. His worst day, June 3, 1861, now appeared to be his best, the catastrophic moment that inspired him the ingenuity which would benefit the world.

“Today,” he said, “I am thankful for what seemed then to me nothing but a blunder of fate, but which was to prove instead a great opportunity.”

JE Hanger, Inc., lives on as part of Hanger Prosthetics and Orthotics, which supplies more prosthetics than any other company in the world. The amazing advances in artificial limbs we’ve seen since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan all build upon James E Hanger’s innovations and continues to assist our wounded warriors to regain their mobility.

<https://veteransbreakfastclub.org>

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**Niagara A photo**

**Front row left to right: RW Bro. Brett Dickinson (Adanac 614), W Bro. Larry Moore (Dufferin 338), W Bro. Richard Engel (Reunion 103), VW Bro. David McGilvray (Brock Daylight 745), RW Bro. D Brent Julian (DDGM, Niagara A District), RW Bro. Sean A Straughan (DDGM, Hamilton B District), RW Bro. Michael Locke (Board of General Purposes), RW Bro. Edward Dunsmore (JW, Board of General Purposes).**

**Back row left to right: W Bro. Gerry Candelino (Garden City 616), W Bro. Christopher Hall (Niagara 2), W Bro. Tom Ziemkiewicz (Ivy 115).**

At the regular meeting of BDL 745 on Saturday, March 11<sup>th</sup>, RW Bro. D Brent Julian, DDGM, made his Official Visit. Accompanying him were several members of the Official Party and also six Worshipful Master's from the various Lodges of Niagara A District.



**“Are the glasses all charged in the West and the South?”, the WM cried  
 “All Charged in the West!”. “All Charged in the South!”, came back the Warden’s reply  
 “Well let them be drained!”, was the Master’s Refrain!  
 “Brethren, Rise Up From Your Chair,  
 Raise Your Glass in the Air,  
 Proclaim With Me,  
 Happy to Meet! Sorry to Part! Happy to Meet Again!”**

Take care. Stay safe and always be kind. *Ted*

