

THE LOVING CUP

****A Cup of Friendship*.***

****A token of support in time of adversity****

PSGM PETER T. BLENKINSOPP REVISION 9-2023



THE HISTORY OF THE LOVING CUP GOES BACK MANY YEARS TO THE ANCIENT PERIOD OF SAXON ENGLAND. (450 – 1066 AD)

WHEN THE ROMANS LEFT ENGLAND IN 410 A.D., THEIR DEPARTURE WAS FOLLOWED BY SAXON INVADERS FROM GERMANY AND DENMARK. THEY RULED ENGLAND AS A SERIES OF FEUDING WARLORDS, WHICH CAUSED A PERIOD OF GREAT INSTABILITY MADE WORSE BY VIKING INVADERS UNTIL THE NORMAN INVASION IN 1066. THIS WAS SOME 400 YEARS BEFORE COLUMBUS DISCOVERED AMERICA.

EVENTUALLY THE VIKINGS WERE DEFEATED, AND THE SEPARATE KINGDOMS OF FEUDING WARLORDS WERE UNITED. STABILITY IN ENGLAND WAS THUS RE-ESTABLISHED.

DURING THIS SAXON TIME, IT WAS CUSTOMARY FOR OUR FOREFATHERS DURING DRINKING PARTIES TO PASS AROUND A LARGE CUP, FROM WHICH EACH DRANK IN TURN, TO TOAST ONE OF THE OTHER PERSONS PRESENT.



SAXON WARLORD



**THE PERSON DRINKING STOOD UP AND LIFTED THE CUP WITH BOTH HANDS
THUS LEAVING HIS BODY EXPOSED, WITHOUT ANY DEFENCE, AND HIS VISION
OBSCURED.**

**AN ENEMY WITH THE INTENTION OF MURDER OFTEN SEIZED UPON THIS
OCCASION TO DO SO.**

**CONSEQUENTLY, WHEN ONE OF THE COMPANY STOOD UP TO DRINK, HE
REQUIRED THE COMPANION WHO SAT NEXT TO HIM TO PLEDGE HIS
ALLEGIANCE.**

**IF AGREED, THE COMPANION STOOD UP WITH A RAISED SWORD TO DEFEND
THE DRINKER, WHILST HE WAS DRINKING AND HIS VISION WAS OBSCURED.**

**THE PROBLEM OF ASSASSINATION WHILE DRINKING FROM A LARGE WINE CUP
IS FURTHER ILLUSTRATED BY AN ACT OF TREACHERY IN ANCIENT ENGLAND
AFTER THE REIGN OF KING EDGAR (959 – 975 AD).**

IN THESE TIMES THE FIRST SON ALWAYS INHERITED THE CROWN TO BECOME KING. CONSEQUENTLY, KING EDGAR'S FIRST SON EDWARD BECAME KING. AN ASSASSINATION WAS PLANNED BY ELFREDA, THE SECOND WIFE OF EDGAR, TO HAVE EDWARD, THE SON OF THE KING'S FIRST WIFE, MURDERED. HIS DEATH WOULD ALLOW HER SON ELTHELRED TO BECOME KING.

THIS MURDER WAS COMMITTED AT CORFE CASTLE IN THE SOUTH OF ENGLAND IN 978 AD, WHEN EDWARD HAD BEEN KING FOR JUST THREE YEARS.



CORFE CASTLE
Artistic Impression



CORFE CASTLE
Today

THE OPPORTUNITY AROSE WHEN EDWARD RETURNED FROM A HUNTING TRIP, THIRSTY, AND WAS DRINKING EAGERLY FROM A SILVER CHALICE.

AT THIS MOMENT, AS ARRANGED, A PAID SERVANT PLUNGED A DAGGER INTO EDWARD'S BACK, WHILE HIS VISION WAS OBSCURED BY THE CUP. THIS INJURY EVENTUALLY CAUSED HIS DEATH.



Edward the Martyr

THIS PIECE OF HISTORICAL TREACHERY, ALONG WITH THE ANCIENT PRINCIPLE OF DEMONSTRATING ALLEGIANCE BY DRAWING A SWORD TO DEFEND A COMPANION WHILE DRINKING FROM A LARGE CHALICE, IS THE BASIS FOR THE SYMBOLISM AND TRADITION OF THE LOVING CUP CEREMONY.

THE CEREMONY HAS ITS ORIGINS IN THE TRADE GUILDS OR LIVERY COMPANIES OF THE CITY OF LONDON FIRST FORMED IN THE 12TH CENTURY. (MEDIEVAL ASSOCIATIONS OF CRAFTSMEN OR MECHANICS.) IT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY ADOPTED BY THE LONDON CHAPTER OF DELTA SIGMA DELTA, TO BE INCORPORATED INTO THEIR BANQUET TOASTS.

ADDITIONALLY, THE CEREMONY IS A SYMBOLIC DEMONSTRATION OF THE WORDS SAID IN OUR INITIATION CEREMONY WHEN WE ARE TOLD:

“TO BE AS WATCHFUL OF A BROTHER’S INTERESTS AS OF OUR OWN, AND TO STAND BY EACH OTHER IN TIMES OF NEED.”

THEREFORE, DURING THE LOVING CUP CEREMONY SOMEONE WHO YOU CAN TRUST STANDS WITH THEIR BACK TO YOU WHILE YOU ARE DRINKING, SO AS TO PROTECT YOU WHILE YOUR VISION IS OBSCURED.

THE CEREMONY STARTS AND FINISHES WITH THE GRAND MASTER.

THE CEREMONY

TODAY THE ACCEPTED ETIQUETTE IS THAT THE PERSON OR GUEST OF HONOUR SITS ON THE RIGHT OF THE PERSON IN CHARGE OR HOST OF THE PROCEEDINGS, ON THIS OCCASION THE GRAND MASTER.



GRAND MASTER

THE GRAND MASTER THEREFORE STARTS THE CEREMONY BY TOASTING THE MOST IMPORTANT PERSON PRESENT WHO WILL BE SEATED ON THEIR RIGHT HAND AND BY DRINKING FROM THE CUP OR CHALICE. WITH A LONG TABLE THE CEREMONY CONTINUES TO INVOLVE ALL ELIGIBLE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE TABLE FROM ADJACENT PERSON TO ADJACENT PERSON UNTIL THE LAST PERSON WHO THEN MOVES BACK TO THE GRAND MASTER TO PROPOSE THE TOAST TO THE GRAND MASTER.

WITH MULTIPLE SMALL TABLES THE TOAST PROCESS MOVES FROM ONE TABLE TO THE NEXT CONVENIENT TABLE UNTIL FINALLY AGAIN THE LAST PERSON TAKES THE CUP OR CHALICE TO TOAST TO THE GRAND MASTER.

THE TOAST



***I DRINK TO YOU IN THE BONDS
OF TRUE BROTHERHOOD IN DELTA SIGMA DELTA***

TOAST CEREMONY POSITIONS



TOAST RECEIVER

STANDS TO RECEIVE TOAST.
THEN TAKES CUP AND TURNS
TO BECOME NEXT
TOAST PROPOSER.

TOAST PROPOSER

PROPOSES TOAST.
PASSES CUP TO
TOAST RECEIVER.
THEN TURNS TO BECOME
NEXT PROTECTOR.

TOAST PROTECTOR

STANDS BACK-TO-BACK
WITH TOAST PROPOSER.
AFTER TOAST, RESUMES SEAT.

"I DRINK TO YOU IN THE BONDS OF TRUE BROTHERHOOD IN
DELTA SIGMA DELTA," AND THEN DRINKS FROM THE CUP.

DURING THIS CEREMONY THE ADJACENT PERSON ON THE BACK SIDE OF THE TOAST-PROPOSER STANDS WITH RIGHT HAND CLENCHED BY LEFT SHOULDER AND WITH THEIR BACK AGAINST THE TOAST- PROPOSER TO PROTECT THEM WHILE THEIR VISION IS OBSCURED DURING DRINKING FROM THE CHALICE.

SIMULTANEOUSLY THE PREVIOUS TOAST-PROPOSER ROTATES OR MOVES TO PROTECT THE BACK OF THE NEW TOAST-PROPOSER.

THE PAGES CIRCULATE TO REPLENISH THE CUPS AS NECESSARY.

THE CUP IS PASSED AROUND THE ROOM TO EVERY PERSON - IN ORDER AND IN SILENCE - UNTIL IT REACHES THE LAST PERSON WHO THEN MOVES WITH A PROTECTOR TO TOAST THE GRAND MASTER.



GRAND MASTER



PROPOSER



PROTECTOR

THE PAGES FILL THE GRAND MASTER'S CUP WITH ALL THE REMAINING CHAMPAGNE, THEN USING THE SAME WORDS, THE GRAND MASTER THEN TOASTS ALL PRESENT IN A SINGLE TOAST. THE TWO PAGES AS PROTECTORS.



SR PAGE



GRAND MASTER



JR PAGE

" I DRINK TO YOU ALL IN THE BONDS OF TRUE BROTHERHOOD IN DELTA SIGMA DELTA," AND IS THEN OBLIGED TO FINISH ALL THAT IS LEFT IN THE CUP AND THEN INVERTS THE CUP OVER THEIR HEAD AS A DEMONSTRATION OF THEIR GOOD OFFICE.

Peter Blenkinsopp 3.9.23

IN 1925, THE LOVING CUP CEREMONY WAS INTRODUCED TO THE LONDON CHAPTER BY BROTHER GEORGE NORTHCROFT, THEN GRAND MASTER OF LONDON CHAPTER, AND AN ALPHA CHAPTER 1889 GRADUATE DELTSIG.

IN 1978, SGM RONALD McCONNELL BROUGHT THE LOVING CUP CEREMONY TO THE SUPREME CHAPTER MEETING FOR ITS ANNUAL LUNCHEON, AFTER WHICH THE CEREMONY BECAME AN ANNUAL TRADITION IN THE U. S. A., AND GRADUALLY SPREAD AMONG GRADUATE AND UNDERGRADUATE CHAPTERS.

