Nuts to Further Affiant Sayeth Naught

Further affiant sayeth naught

References


Bryan A. Garner, A Dictionary of Modern Legal Usage 378 (2d ed. 1995): “American lawyers frequently end affidavits with some variation of this sentence: ‘Further affiant sayeth not.’ This sentence gives rise to three stylistic dilemmas: first, is it sayeth or saith; second, is it not or naught; and third, is the sentence necessary at all?…Among American lawyers who use the phrase, sayeth predominates; among American lawyers who rightly pride themselves on their style, the phrase does not appear at all….The predominant form [between not and naught] is Further affiant sayeth not. But this is nonsense, because it is literally translatable as, ‘The affiant says not further’….The form with naught, by contrast, makes literal sense….[But t]he best choice, stylistically speaking, is to use these phrases not.”


Wayne Schiess, What Plain English Really Is, 9 Scribes J. Legal Writing 43, 71 (2003–2004) (forthcoming): “This is the profession in which no lawyer would speak to a jury in complex and jargon-filled legalese, but if asked to write an affidavit for someone on that jury, the same lawyer wouldn’t hesitate to use the phrase Further affiant sayeth naught.”

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