

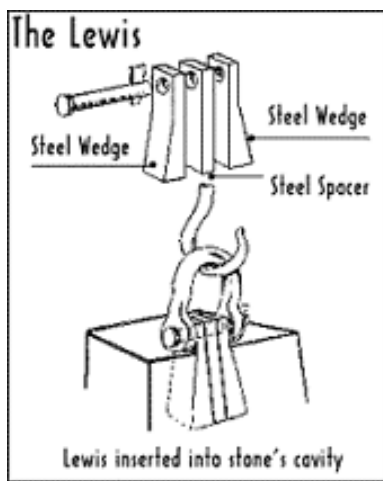
The Lewis Jewel

By Bro Timothy Kaftanic

History: Operative

The word Lewis comes from the Latin, *Levo*, which means to lift. The Lewis was used in operative masonry lift heavy stones and put them into place. It applied the principles of leverage and utilizes the weight of the stone to act on the long lever arms which results in a very high friction where the arms make contact with the inside of the stone and prevents slipping

(Stutt, Donald (2011). *Defining the Lewis*. Retrieved from <http://www.freemasonry.bcy.ca/texts/gmd2007/vgmd26.pdf>).



History: Speculative

It is interesting to note the Prince of Whales, Frederick "Louis" had been made a Freemason in the year November 5, 1737. His sons would follow their father into freemasonry.

Masonic historians conclude the term came into use in the 18th century. The Lecture in the Second Degree published by William Preston in the 1780s contains a discourse on the Lewis:

WM- Brother J.W., How were the sons of craftsmen named?

JW - To the son on whom these honors were bequeathed, the appellation of Lewis was given, that from henceforth he might be entitled to all the privileges which that honor conferred.

The Wilkinson MS Catechism (c 1730 / 1740) states the following:

Q. What's a Mason's Sons Name?

A. Lewis

From the second edition of Anderson's Constitutions published in 1738:

*"Again let it pass to the ROYAL lov'd NAME,
Whose glorious Admission has crown'd all our Fame:
May a LEWIS be born, whom the World shall admire,
Serene as his MOTHER, August as his SIRE.*

From the Grand Lodge of England 1801 Junior Warden's Lecture:

"The word Lewis denotes strength, and is here depicted by certain pieces of metal dovetailed into a stone, which forms a cramp, and enables the operative Mason to raise great weights to certain heights with little encumbrance, and to fix them in their proper places. Lewis, likewise denotes the son of a Mason; his duty is to bear the heat and burden of the day, from which his parents, by reason of their age, ought to be exempt; to help them in time of need, and thereby render the close of their days happy and comfortable; his privilege for so doing is to be made a Mason before any other person however dignified."

It is evident by our history that Masons should treasure the passing down of our rich tradition to our sons. We can see above in Anderson's constitutions that the admission of a son in Masonry, the passing down of our tradition, is our crown, our greatest achievement in the Craft.

Masonry is work and as indicated earlier, it becomes the son's responsibility to take on the pressures and weight of Masonry and life. The Lewis Jewel is a symbol that denotes the son has willingly taken on these pressures as father steps aside and allows him. This does not just apply to fathers and sons but also younger Masons stepping up and bearing the burdens of Masonry for the older.

It is a great moment when a son is initiated as a member of his father's lodge. When your son or perhaps a younger Mason who looks up to you decides to pick up your working tools, learns how to use them then takes over your duties, it can produce not only pride, but also relief as burdens of Masonry and life diminish.

When we look back on our lives as men and Masons, we may be able to identify many accomplishments or achievements by our hands. However, no accomplishment is more lasting, having the greatest impact than that of passing that what we know to our sons and younger Masons.

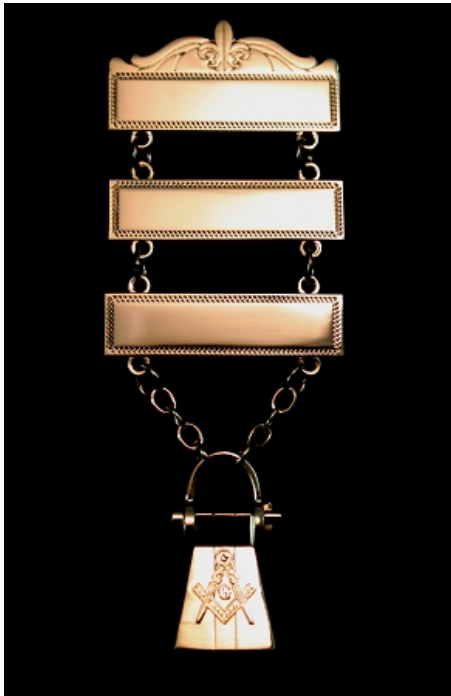
When I think of the word "impact", I think of the meteor crater near Winslow, AZ. This crater is the result of a collision between an asteroid traveling 26,000 miles per hour and planet Earth approximately 50,000 years ago. What remains is a crater nearly one mile across, 2.4 miles in

circumference and more than 550 feet deep (www.meteorcrater.com). There is nothing that remains of the asteroid, only the permanent mark in the surface of the earth as a reminder of what happened many years ago.

We as Masons should strive to make this type of impact in our lodges and in our communities. Actions that resonate through time long after your weary feet have come to the end of life's toilsome journey.

The Lewis Jewel, seen here on my jacket, consists of two or more bars connected by chains. The upper bar contains the name of the father and the date of his initiation. The bottom or lower bars contain the name of the son and date of his initiation. The lower bar is connected directly to the Lewis tool, signifying he now bears the weight of Masonry on his shoulders.

The Grand Lodge of Washington allows a person to apply for the jewel if his father is or was a Mason in good standing.



1 When the time drew near for David to die, he gave a charge to Solomon his son.

2 "I am about to go the way of all the earth," he said. "So be strong, act like a man, 3 and observe what the Lord your God requires: Walk in obedience to him, and keep his decrees and commands, his laws and regulations, as written in the Law of Moses. Do this so that you may prosper in all you do and wherever you go 4 and that the Lord may keep his promise to me: 'If your descendants watch how they live, and if they walk faithfully before me with all their heart and soul, you will never fail to have a successor on the throne of Israel.'

1 Kings 2:1-2