

LIFETIME RESPONSIBILITIES ASSUMED BY A MASONIC LEWIS OR LOUVETEAU

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At a very young age, I was exposed to the happiness associated with membership in the Masonic Fraternity. My Dad was a Mason for 52 years. Neither of my grandfathers was a Mason, but both of them had at least one brother in their immediate family who was a Master Mason. In addition, one of my Great Grandfathers was Illustrious Brother George White, 33^o and a Knight Templar. He was extremely active in fraternal circles, being a member of the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F. Lodge) at Naponee, Nebraska, as well as the Knights of Pythias Lodge.

Coming from a Masonic family enabled me to see the friendships and loyalty that Masons had for each other. I knew that the clasped hands of friendship signified the special bonds of Brotherhood (or the Mystic Tie of Brotherhood) and that it encompassed both responsibilities and privileges. Duties to fellow members were rewarded with reciprocal privileges. Respect toward fellow Masons was rewarded with reciprocal honors and esteem. The "benefit" of membership wasn't necessarily a monetary or pecuniary benefit, but a friendship society with members poised with a helping-hand, a supportive voice and a caring heart.

My Dad taught me that although Masons walk on the level, our charitable acts of Masonic kindness and helpfulness shouldn't be kept count of by a "tab" or tally. When we enter Masonry, we ideally see our fellow Masonic Brothers on an equal footing in regard to their position standing beside us. We all have equal value as Masonic Brothers regardless of our station in life & regardless of our fame, profession, avocation, hobbies, religious persuasion or wealth. However, we know that aged Brethren and infirm Brethren have different needs; Brothers in sickness or distress, or those beset by other types of misfortune have different needs too. My Dad was fond of saying that the Cable-Tow reminds us to help any deserving Mason if within the reach of our Cable-Tow (If our resources, abilities, and proximity to the individual needing aid allows such assistance to be given.) I saw my Dad help many Masons in need at various points in his life.

On one occasion, I saw a reverse instance. My Dad was on the receiving-end of assistance when a drive-shaft of our car literally fell out and onto a busy highway in Kansas. A kind gentleman in traffic behind us, stopped and gave my Dad, my Mom and me a ride to the nearest repair shop. My Dad asked the gentleman why he stopped to help us; the man said he saw a Shrine decal on our car and decided to stop to help us since he was a Shriner too. In my years as a Mason, I've tried to help Masons whenever and wherever I could. I had a similar situation in April of 2004 when I was traveling southbound on Interstate I-35 near Perry, Oklahoma. I saw an older gentleman with a cone stranded beside his vehicle. It was a hot day, with heavy traffic, and cars were flying by him at 70 m.p.h. (or more). He looked visibly weary, even bordering on frail; yet nobody stopped to help him. I happened to see a Masonic Square and Compass on his vehicle. Although I had passed him, I quickly pulled over to the shoulder of the road and let the bulk of the heavy traffic pass-on-by before I started to back up. When I finally got within a short distance of the man, I asked him if he needed a ride. He said, "Yes." I took him about 7 miles to his residence in Perry, Oklahoma. He thanked me. He asked why I chose to give him a ride when everyone else ignored his plight. I pointed to the emblem on his car and inquired whether he was a Mason? He nodded in the affirmative and said he was a Past Master of the local Lodge. I told him that I am a Mason too, and that I believe in helping others when we can. Some years have passed, but I decided to phone

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Bro.: Larry ____ (I won't use his last name) in May of this year (2008) to see how he was. He responded when I called and he said his health was "much improved" from when I last saw him. Again, he said he appreciated my giving him a lift. I cheerfully replied, "It was no problem; my pleasure to help."

It would make this world run a whole lot smoother if more people cared about each other with "no strings attached." I guess it all depends upon how people were raised. Thankfully, I was raised by good parents. My parents were both raised in good households, as well. But I can't help thinking that some of the good virtues inculcated in our home were reinforced in my Dad's heart when he was "Raised" a Mason by his Lodge in 1945...some 18 years before I was born in 1963.

In many families, people often name their children with distinctive names that radiate character, special virtues, or attributes that they feel 'mark' the child as unique. Sometimes those given names are passed-down the generations. In my own case, I was named "JAMES ADOLPH MARPLES." The "James" comes from my Dad's maternal uncle: James William Marples (1864-1962). My Great-Uncle was a Master Mason for about 47 years and he died the year before I was born. The "Adolph" comes from my mother's father and her brother. My maternal grandfather Adolph H. Riedl Sr. (1894-1975) was a U.S. Navy veteran of World War I. His son, my uncle Adolph H. Riedl, Jr. (1925-1981) was a U.S. Navy veteran of World War II. Since my uncle was a patriotic American serving in a war against a German enemy headed by the despised Adolf Hitler, my uncle chose to use the nickname "Jack" to avoid any misperception by others. I have always known the background explanation which profiled the people who were my namesakes, and I have mostly used my first name for nicknames derived from my first name Jim, James, Jimmy, 'Hey You') in my dealings with others. In the 1970s, I nearly avoided mentioning my middle initial at all...because, even after 30 years after Hitler's death there were still people who would have mocked my middle name. About the time of my high school graduation in 1982, I began to grow more comfortable or confident about using my middle initial and I don't mind telling people my full name (but I feel compelled to explain my family history in a continuing effort to repel any comment surrounding Adolf Hitler).

In my heart, I am proud of my given names. "James" is a Saint's name. It is an English name which is a variant of the Hebrew name "Jacob," whose meaning is "he who supplants." Personally, I hope that I don't usurp anyone's role in life by plots, schemes, intrigue or underhanded means. I would prefer to think that I am a willing "substitute" or "helper" to fill in and do a task, should a need arise. My middle name "Adolph" is Germanic in origin and means "a noble, majestic wolf." It is common in its Latinized form "Adolphus".

I am glad that the names "James" and "Adolph" are linked in my personage. I am part "English" and part "Germanic" (technically Moravian, Czech, and German).

In Freemasonry, our Craft has honorable roots, which have English, Scottish, French, German, Latin, and Hebrew influences). As previously noted, Adolf Hitler's infamous actions tarnished the otherwise good name of Adolph. Similarly, there have been a handful of irregular, illegal and clandestine groups (especially in Europe) calling themselves "Masonic," which have, on occasion, tarnished the good image of Masonry in the eyes of the public-at-large. Regular and legitimate Masonic Bodies are respected when their members conduct themselves in a laudable manner inside and outside the Lodge room; performing good works for themselves and for their friends, families, and communities in which they live. When a Mason helps another Brother Mason's wife,



widow, or children, he is fulfilling a duty as old as the Scriptures. The clasped hands of friendship often extend across the generations. Fraternal Orders cannot (and should not) replace the nuclear family in raising children. However, Lodge members can be good role-models and be somewhat of an extended, extended family to the next generation. As with any family, a member of the family "fits" a certain role or category; with the passage of time responsibilities change, but privileges are derived in the stages-of-life.

In this presentation, I wish to focus on the LIFETIME RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES & PRIVILEGES ASSUMED BY A MASONIC LEWIS OR LOUVETEAU.

I first discovered the definition of an "Lewis" in a Masonic context quite soon after I became a Mason at age 18 in Kansas. I was reading in a Masonic Library and the word and definition instinctively caught my eye. In short, the English word "Lewis" and the French word "Louveteau" now both have the same definition: "A Mason's son" = "Son of a Mason".

There are some scholars who split-hairs over the definition of an Masonic Lewis. The broadest definition is simply: --- a son of a Mason. I have seen a more narrow definition of it, as the first son born to a man after that man has been Raised to the Sublime Degree of a Master Mason. I remember I smiled after initially reading both of those definitions because I met the criteria under both.

As indicated, the English term "Lewis" and French term "Louveteau" essentially have the same meaning today = son of a Mason. However, the two words were vastly different in how they originated and in how they were expressed. I would compare it to two pathways going up a mountain. One is straight & practical, while the other is long, winding, scenic and possibly frightening at times. But, in the end, regardless of which pathway was used, people still arrived at the same spot. In England, a son of a Mason (a Masonic Lewis) was likened to an ideal son being a helpful working tool or implement to aid his aged parents. In France and Germany, a similar idea of a working tool or implement was known --- but those Brethren had a secondary notion which was totally different --- sort of implying that a son of a Mason was comparable to a lone wolf chasing-away everything in its path. I suppose I could envision it in charitable terms if I think of a big strapping young man whose physical presence wards-off anyone who tries to take advantage of his parents.

In England, an "Lewis" was an instrument used by Operative Masons. It was a metal cramp inserted into the top of heavy stones to lift them with leverage with minimal exertion. Today, Freemasons in England and in Pennsylvania regard the Lewis as an implement which is a symbol of strength. Elsewhere in America, the term "Lewis" is almost unheard of except in circles of Masonic Scholars. As Masonic Rosicrucians, since we are a scholarly body within the fraternity, I would like to point to an excerpt from an old Masonic lecture, whereby we find the following question and answer session:

Question: "What do we call the son of a Mason?"
Answer: "A Lewis."

Q.: "What does that denote?"
A.: "Strength."

Q.: "How is a Lewis depicted in a Freemason's Lodge?"



A.: "As a cramp of metal, by which, when fixed into a stone, great and ponderous weights are raised to a certain height and fixed upon their bases, without which Operative Masons could not conveniently do."

Q.: "What is the duty of a Lewis, the son of a Mason, to his aged parents?"

A.: "To bear the heavy burden in the heat of the day and help them in time of need, which, by reason of their great age, they ought to be exempted from, so as to render the close of their days happy and comfortable."

Q.: "His privilege for so doing?"

A.: "To be made a Mason before any other person, however dignified by birth, rank, or riches, unless he, through complaisance, waives this privilege."

One notable example of a "Masonic Lewis" is the first President of the United States of America, Bro.: George Washington. He was initiated into Masonry at the Lodge at Fredericksburg, Virginia, on the 4th day of November 1852, when he was just 20 years old. Although age 21 wasn't universally recognized yet as the definite standard of "lawful age," prevailing custom usually invoked age 21 as the legal threshold. Furthermore, another future President of the United States of America was Bro. James Monroe, Initiated November 9th 1775 in St. John's Regimental Lodge in the Continental Army; later transferring his membership to the Williamsburg Lodge in Williamsburg, Virginia. Bro. Monroe was initiated an Entered Apprentice Mason when he was 17 years old (not quite 18). This fact strongly suggests, that he too, was a Masonic Lewis or Louveteau.

In my own case, I was initiated into DeMolay at age 13 (the youngest age possible at that time). In similar fashion, I was initiated as an Entered Apprentice in Sunflower Lodge #86 in Wichita, Kansas, about 5 weeks after my 18th birthday. Although I entered Masonry at the appropriate legal age of adulthood and didn't seek (or receive) any special treatment as a Masonic Lewis, I think I was accorded minor courtesies as a Mason's son. I think it was quite evident to the Lodge that I was a fairly good son to my parents. Both of my parents are deceased now. In retrospect, or in hindsight, I wish I had done more for them. I had my usual moments of striving to please them, serve them, and yes - obey them. But I also had a few weak moments and failings when I felt weary, strained, and yes-- impatient toward them. It was difficult being a caregiver to aged parents and not having anyone else to lean on. For the most part, my patience and willingness was (and is) strong. But I must confess that I was worn thin at times even when I didn't realize it. For the most part, it was relatively easy and enjoyable; although, I experienced moments which strained my nerves and nearly took-away my calmness and my composure. All-in-all, I think I was mostly a good Masonic Lewis, albeit with failings I wish I could change, but cannot, since I cannot turn back time. I have been a Master Mason for 26 years now, and I occasionally see a few Brother Masons whom I sat in Lodge with soon after my Initiation. As noted earlier: kindness and Brotherhood span the generations.

For many years I've wanted to research more into the lifetime responsibilities and privileges assumed by a Masonic Lewis or Masonic Louveteau, but I didn't have enough internal and external inspiration until now. Recently, I had the good fortune to purchase some old, old Masonic booklets and materials from a lady in Texas who was selling books which had originated from an estate sale. Many of these booklets and papers were signed or autographed by the original owner, a man named Philip Crosby Tucker, who sometimes signed them as "Philip C Tucker", "P.C. Tucker" or "Philip C Tucker, Esq." As it turns out, some of the booklets go back to the year 1866. In those days in Texas, there



were a fair number of Master Masons (but nowhere near the number we have today). And, in 1866, there was only literally a handful of Scottish Rite Masons in Texas, one of whom was Illustrious Brother Philip Crosby Tucker, 33° and a Knight Templar. What is even more unique is that Bro.: Tucker was a close personal friend of then-Sovereign Grand Commander Albert Pike, 33°. When Pike died in 1891, he was succeeded as Sovereign Grand Commander by James Cunningham Batchelor, 33°, who served in that office from 1891 to 1893. Upon his death, he was succeeded in that office by, yes, this same Philip Crosby Tucker, 33°, who served from 1893 to 1894 as head of all Scottish Rite Masons in the Southern Jurisdiction of the U.S.A. What a marvelous thing to be able to purchase and own some of Bro.: Tucker's autographed Masonic periodicals!!!! They gave him much enjoyment in his lifetime - undoubtedly increasing his Masonic knowledge and contributing to his leadership roles in all areas of our Craft. These booklets exist in relatively good shape considering their age. Although the paper is getting brittle & delicate, I try to read those booklets to broaden my own Masonic knowledge. By sharing the information gleaned from them, in this presentation, I hope to stimulate additional interest for Masonic scholars in our time and in future generations.

Perhaps one of the most interesting booklets in Bro.: Tucker's collection was the May 1881 issue of THE MASONIC AGE, Volume III, Issue #5. On page 132 of that issue is an article, translated from CLAVEL by Bro. A. F. Cykoski for The Masonic Age, entitled "A Louveteau." Instead of picking out excerpts, I feel it is essential to quote the entire article, in order to keep the message in context:

"A Louveteau is the son of a Mason. The name is generally disfigured; it is sometimes as Lofton, Loweton, Loveton, and Loveson, because the etymology of it is very ancient, and has been lost.

The initiated, in the mysteries of Isis, carried, even in public, a mask of the form of the head of a sort of a hyena, or that of a gilded wolf, therefore, the initiated was frequently called a wolf. The son of an initiated was qualified a young wolf, or Louveteau. Macrobus tells us on this subject that the ancients found a conformity between the wolf and the sun, which the initiated represented in the ceremonial of his reception. "In fact," says he, "at the approach of the wolf the flock is dispersed;" so the constellations, which are a flock of stars, disappear before the light of the sun.

It is the habit of many Lodges that, when the wife of a Mason is about to be delivered of a child, a doctor (a Mason) visits her, inquires after her health in the name of the Lodge, offers her his medical assistance, and even pecuniary help, if he thinks she may need it. Nine days after her delivery, the Worshipful Master, the Senior and Junior Wardens, pay her a visit, and congratulate her upon this happy event. If the newly-born is a boy, the Lodge is called for his adoption. The Lodge is then adorned with green branches and flowers, censers conveniently disposed, and incense burned. The Louveteau, with his nurse, are brought, before the opening of the Lodge, in an adjoining room. The Lodge is opened, and the Senior and Junior Wardens, natural godfathers of the child, go out at the head of a committee to meet him. The chairman of the committee addresses a speech to the nurse, in which he recommends to her, not only to watch with care over the child's health, but even to cultivate his young intelligence, and never to speak to him but of sense and truth. Here the Louveteau is separated from the nurse and placed by the father upon a cushion. He is then brought into the Lodge by the committee, who enter, under an arch of foliage, towards the East.



"What do you bring here, my Brother?" asks the Worshipful Master, addressing the godfather.

"The son of one of our Brothers, whom the Lodge will please to adopt," replies the Senior Warden.

"What is his name and what Masonic name do you wish to give him?"

The godfather replies, in adding to the family and given names of the child, some characteristic name, such as Truth, Veracity, Devotedness, or some other of this sort.

Here the Worshipful Master descends the steps of the East, approaches to the Louveteau, and, extending his hands above the child's head, addresses to Heaven a prayer that the child be worthy one day of the love and care that the Lodge will bestow upon him. After which, he throws incense in the censer, and pronounces the Entered Apprentice obligation, which the godfathers repeat after him for the Louveteau. He then ties a white leather apron to the child, and proclaims him an adopted child of the Lodge, and all the Brethren applaud.

The ceremonies accomplished, the Worshipful Master returns to his throne, orders the Senior and Junior Wardens, with the Louveteau, to the head of the North column, and repeats to them the obligations, to which, as godfathers, they are bound to. After this the Louveteau is carried back, with the same ceremony, to the adjoining room, and delivered to his nurse.

The adoption of a Louveteau binds all the members of the Lodge to watch over and superintend his education, and afterwards to render him assistance, if, in their judgment, they deem it necessary.

Accurate minutes are taken of the ceremony, which is signed by all the members of the Lodge, and is given to the father of the Louveteau. This record exempts the Louveteau, when he has attained the age required for initiation, from all ceremonies. He is only bound to take the obligation of an Entered Apprentice."

Albert Pike, 33° and K.T., wrote a treatise in 1871, outlining the "Reception of a Louveteau" and it is highly probable that Pike borrowed from the 1866 account I quoted above, as well as his borrowing from other contemporary sources.

Being a son of a Mason myself, the above account of the reception of a Louveteau is very interesting. This "adoption" of the Louveteau (or Lewis) by a whole Lodge is a tangible expression of the honorable obligations we have taken as Masons---signaling that we care about our fellow members and their families, and that we will even provide assistance or care for their well-being in times of need. Further, the prayers to Heaven are not intended to replace the individual prayers or individual religious faiths or preferences of anyone there assembled. Those prayers are added prayers by those who wish the child well in life, and pray for his worthiness to walk tall, practice moral virtues, and be deserving of honorable admiration for all of his childhood, and more importantly, for all of his adulthood.

It's just like the examples I cited earlier...when my family had car-trouble in the mid-1970s, a kind Mason helped us in a pinch. And, many years later, in 2004, when I was driving and saw a Mason in a pinch with his own car-trouble, I stopped to help. "Kindness" is like a handshake. Extending and Receiving. The hand of friendship is the grip of unity and solidarity. Unity builds strength. And, strength builds confidence. Confidence builds character. And, character makes the world go 'round in a smooth cycle.



Our families and our communities are strengthened by our firm dedication to Masonic principles. The late Illustrious Brother Henry C. Clausen, 33° and a Knight Templar, the former Sovereign Grand Commander of the Southern Jurisdiction of the Scottish Rite (and hence, a successor to Pike and to Tucker) once said: "Do good to all men. Try to remember that the human race is one great family which you are a part. Every true Mason labors for the good of his Brother so as to benefit him mentally and morally, teaching that he should practice humility, patience, charity and self-denial...." I hope that more Masonic Lewises or Masonic Louveteaus will step-up when they reach adulthood to join us, fully, by becoming Master Masons themselves. The Masonic Lewis or Louveteau will always have the duty of standing by his parents with the potential sacrificing of his wants for their needs. However, by joining a Lodge and being a full member in good-standing, he will have a wider circle of Fraternal Brothers in that "extended, extended family" to call upon for guidance, or to otherwise help, aid, and assist. With the ebb & flow of time, by carrying the load and making those solemn promises carrying lifetime responsibilities, the Masonic Lewis or Louveteau will be earning rights to mutual and reciprocal privileges which will benefit him and his family in the years to come when the Lewis/Louveteau has a son of his own. Then, the pendulum will swing back to its point-of-origin and the life-cycle will begin anew. A young Mason who yields and sacrifices his time, talent, means, and soul on behalf of his parents is worthy of praise, and he is truly worthy of tender respect and loving care when he himself reaches an advanced age.

Sources / Recommended Readings:

- Mackey's Encyclopedia of Freemasonry, The Supreme Council, 33° of the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, Washington, D.C. . .
- The Scottish Rite Journal, March 1999. Official publication of The Supreme Council, 33° of the Ancient & Accepted Scottish Rite, Southern Jurisdiction, Washington, D.C.
- The Masonic Age - A Monthly Magazine For Masons; Published by The Masonic Age Publishing Company, St. Louis, Missouri. Ben Chase, Editor. Vol. III Issue #5, May 1881, pages 132-133: "A LOUVETEACU."
- Clausen's Commentaries On Morals and Dogma by Henry C. Clausen, 33°. Published by The Supreme Council, 33°, Southern Jurisdiction, U.S.A., Washington DC. 1976 edition. Page 168.
- Grand Lodge of Masons in Pennsylvania. Archival information on the Masonic biography of Bro. (and U.S. President) James Monroe.

AUTHOR'S NOTE:

Bro. Philip C. Tucker was born in Vermont in 1826 and joined the York Rite there. He moved to Texas in 1852 at age 26, where he established a law practice. He served with the Confederate Armed Forces in the American Civil War. Tucker was known to treat enemy soldiers with dignity and he even arranged for deceased Union soldiers who were Masons to be accorded Masonic funeral rites. Sometimes other soldiers protested; but to his credit, Tucker stood his ground and insisted that Brotherly Courtesy must extend to any deserving Mason who had died.

Tucker was Grand Commander of the Grand Commandery of Knights Templar of Texas in 1864; Grand High Priest of the Grand Chapter of Royal Arch Masons of Texas in 1865; and Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Texas in 1869.



Bro. Tucker accepted an invitation from Albert Pike to introduce the Scottish Rite to Texas. On February 4-5, 1867, Bro. Tucker traveled to New Orleans, La, where Pike communicated the A & ASR Degrees to him. At first, he became a Deputy of The Supreme Council, but soon became the first Sovereign Grand Inspector General in Texas. Tucker served in the Chairs with Albert Pike. At Pike's death, Bro. J.C. Batchelor became Sov. Grand Commander. And, Batchelor's unexpected death in 1893 caused another period of grieving with the top leadership position vacant. Ultimately, Bro. Tucker was the man they chose.

On July 28, 1893, he was elected Sovereign Grand Commander of The Supreme Council of the Thirty-third Degree, for the Southern Jurisdiction of the USA, with its seat in Washington DC. Bro Tucker moved to Washington DC to assume his duties. Unfortunately, his term, too, was short-lived, he died in office on July 9, 1894. His body was taken back to Galveston, Texas for burial.

About the Author:

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