

Lewis

The surname of LEWIS was a baptismal name 'the son of Louis or Llewys', an ancient and still popular font name. This was the name of the founder of the Frankish dynasty, recorded in Latin as Ludovicus. The name was popular throughout France in the Middle Ages, and was introduced into England by the Normans. On the continent it was a hereditary name borne by many French kings. The bulk of European surnames in countries such as England and France were formed in the 13th and 14th centuries. The process started earlier and continued in some places into the 19th century, but the norm is that in the 11th century people did not have surnames, whereas by the 15th century they did. Early records of the name mention Loweis le Briton, 1166, County Essex. John Levesone of County Somerset, was documented during the reign of Edward III (1327-1377). Llewely ap-Madoc, archdeacon of Brecon in 1437. Lewis Ap-Owen, was the archdeacon of Cardigan in the year 1487. William Lewys and Alice Mason were married at St. George's Chapel, Mayfair, London in 1521. Humphrey Smith and Ursula Lewis were married at the same church in the year 1586. In many parts of central and western Europe, hereditary surnames began to become fixed at around the 12th century, and have developed and changed slowly over the years. As society became more complex, and such matters as the management of tenure, and in particular the collection of taxes were delegated to special functionaries, it became imperative to distinguish a more complex system of nomenclature to differentiate one individual from another. A notable member of the name was Matthew Gregory Lewis, author of novels and plays of terror, author of the novel 'The Monk'. Harry Sinclair Lewis (1885-1951) the author of 'Babbitt' and the first American to gain the Nobel prize for literature. The name is also spelt Lewison and Levison. At first the coat of arms was a practical matter which served a function on the battlefield and in tournaments. With his helmet covering his face, and armour encasing the knight from head to foot, the only means of identification for his followers, was the insignia painted on his shield and embroidered on his surcoat, the flowing and draped garment worn over the armour.

ARMS - Sable a lion rampant argent

CREST - A lion sejant argent

MOTTO - - MIHI SED PATRIAE ET REGINA

For my country and Queen

The lion depicted in the arms is the noblest of all wild beasts, and is made to be the emblem of strength and valour.