

# The Making of Jeans

“Blue jeans” were created by two impoverished men: one a tailor, the other a peddler.

Levi Strauss, a Bavarian Jew, immigrated to the United States in 1848. He eked out a poor living selling dry goods from door to door. Later, in San Francisco, he stitched a pair of heavy canvas and created the first pair of “Levi pants.”



The word, *jeans*, comes from the French phrase, *bleu de Genes*, literally the *blue of Genoa*. Jeans fabric, or denim, originated in the French town of Nimes, from which *denim* (de Nimes) gets its name.

Strauss was selling blue jeans under the “Levi’s” brand to the mining communities of California in the 1850s. One of Strauss’ customers was Jacob Davis, a tailor who frequently purchased bolts of cloth from the Levi Strauss & Co. wholesale house. After one of Davis’ customers kept buying cloth to reinforce torn pants, he had an idea to use copper rivets to reinforce the points of strain, such as on the pocket corners and at the top of the button fly. Davis did not have the required money to purchase a patent, so he wrote Strauss suggesting that they go into business together. After Strauss accepted Davis’ offer, the two men received U.S. Patent 139,121, for an “Improvement in Fastening Pocket-Openings” on May 20, 1873.



*Jacob Davis*

In 1885, jeans could be bought in the U.S. for \$1.50 (about \$95 in 2010 money). Today, an equivalent pair of jeans can be purchased for around \$30 to \$50, but more stylish pairs can cost much more. On the other hand, many brands of jeans are currently available for much less, including a robust resale market for used jeans.

Jeans are now a very popular form of casual dress around the world, and have been so for decades. They come in many styles and colors; however, blue jeans are particularly identified with American culture, especially the American Old West.

Jeans, then, have become an entrepreneurial venture that has endured, bringing satisfaction and utility to people, young and old alike.

Work is ordained by God. When the Earth was first created, the Lord made man and “put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it” (Genesis 2:15).

So, whether an individual is engaged in manufacturing jeans, washing dishes, keeping floors of a nursing center clean and shiny or administering medication ordered by a physician, human labor is blessed of God.

What we do to serve others is very important to Him in the world that He made.

– Beecher Hunter