



Herbert Shorey Baker.

From the Union Lodge No.9, 1910 Register we know the following about **Herbert Shorey Baker**. He is Roll Number 484. He was a 24year old student whose home was in Napanee when he initiated into Union Lodge No. 9 the 6th of February, 1914. He was passed the 8th of May, 1914 and Raised the 12th of June, 1914. His Grand Lodge Certificate is number 91,775. He died the 5th of April, 1916, Killed in Action in Mesopotamia.

Mesopotamia is modern day Iraq, Syria and Kuwait. It was located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers which is what the word actually means 'between two rivers'.

The 1891 Census of Canada shows Herbert as the youngest child of five to a Robert H. and Marcy or Mercy Aylesworth Baker in East Deseronto where he was a butcher. The 1901 Census shows that the family moved to the Westward in Napanee. It also specifies that the father and mother were born in Ontario in 1850 and 1848 respectively. It states that Herbert was born on the 21st of October 1889. The 1911 Census confirms much of this information but also tells us that they lived at 27 Dundas Street in Napanee. Additionally, it tells us that his two older sisters had become school teachers. With some further research I found his mother and father in the 1881 Census living in Ernestown Township where they were farmers.

The rest of the information about Herbert Shorey Baker is provided to us from his Attestation Papers, Veterans Affairs file and a file in the Queen's University Archives. Herbert appears to have graduated from Napanee District Collegiate and Vocational Institute as his name is listed on a poster the school has of its First World War Veterans. He proceeded to Queen's University where he graduated in 1912 with a B.A. and a Bachelor of Science in 1914. He immediately moved to Calgary, Alberta to work as a Mining Engineer. Then on September 25, 1914 in Val Cartier, Quebec he signed his Attestation Papers Number 5556 (*Regimental Number*) where he indicated his birthdate to be October 21, 1890 (in deference to the 1901 Census). These papers indicated that he was Single and had served in the 5th Company of the Canadian Field Engineers as a Corporal for four years. As such he was called a 'Sapper'.

Also called a Pioneer or Combat Engineer who was a combatant or soldier performing a variety of military engineering duties such as bridge-building, laying or clearing minefields, demolitions, field defences, and general construction, as well as road and airfield construction and repair. A Sapper has been associated with engineers for many generations. From the French work 'sape' meaning undermine. In the French Army digging a trench under fire was known as 'driving a sap' and the men who performed this task were known as 'Sapeurs'. In 1813 the British Royal Engineers

adopted the title Royal Sappers and Miners. Then in 1856 their common soldier had his position changed from a 'Private' to a 'Sapper'.

Herbert was an individual who stood 5'8" in height, had a girth of 34 inches with an expansion of 3 inches. His complexion was fair with dark brown eyes and light brown hair. He had an appendix scar and a mole under his left arm. He was enlisted in the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force and in the 2nd Field Company Engineers but was transferred from the 5th Co. to the 1st Co. on September 25, 1914. His unit sailed from Quebec; October 3, 1914 aboard the S. S. Zeeland.

A British and Belgian ocean liner built in 1900 for the Red Star Line at Clydebank, Scotland. It had its name changed during the First World War to the S. S. Northland when it served as a troop ship. It was eventually scrapped in 1930.

Upon arriving on the Salisbury Plain as a Sapper in the 1st Division Engineers, 1st Field Co. it appears that on January 1, 1915 he was discharged from that Field Co. with no accompanying reason and enlisted in the Imperial Army on the same date receiving a commission as a 2nd Lieutenant probably in the British Expeditionary Force, Royal Warwickshire Regiment 9th Battalion. At some point he was shipped overseas because he was wounded twice at the Dardanelles during the evacuation of Gallipoli.

The Gallipoli Evacuation took place December 9, 1915 to January 9, 1916 removing 105,000 men from Anzac Cove and Suvla Bay plus an additional 35,000 men from Helles. It took longer to make the decision than to perform the operation.

He was mentioned in Dispatches twice and promoted to Captain. His battalion was sent to North Africa and the Tigris Line where he was 'Killed in Action' on the 5th of April, 1916.

His death coincides with the First Battle of Kut-Al-Amara which turned into a British humiliation.

He is buried in the Almara War Cemetery, Iraq Plot XIII L9.

At a Memorial Service for Baker, a Reverend Wilson who was a fellow student of Baker and W. S. Herrington spoke.

He was one of the 151 Queen's Graduates, Alumni, Undergraduates and Staff that were killed while on Active Military Service 1914-1918. His photograph hangs in Memorial Hall, Queen's University. We cherish his memory in our hearts.

Prepared by

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CAPTAIN HERBERT S. BAKER KILLED ON TIGRIS LINE

SON OF R. H. BAKER, NAPANEE,
AND FORMER UNIVERSITY OF
TORONTO STUDENT.

(Special Despatch to The Globe.)

Napanee, April 17.—Word has been received here that Captain Herbert S. Baker, B.A., B.Sc., of the Royal Warwickshire Regiment, had been killed in action on the Tigris line, April 4, 1916. No details were given in the official message to the father, Mr. R. H. Baker, who has lived retired here for many years.

Capt. Baker was twenty-six years old, and very popular in his school days here. He was also a graduate of the University of Toronto, and the School of Practical Science, Toronto. He enlisted with the first contingent going overseas from Canada. On reaching England he took out a commission as Lieutenant. His promotion to a Captaincy quickly followed. Deceased was a member of the Trinity Methodist Church here.

Besides his father a brother resides in the west.

