

MILITARY ORDER OF THE LOYAL LEGION OF THE UNITED STATES



Loyal Legion Vignettes



**LIEUTENANT COLONEL JOHN POPE BAKER, USA
(1838 Illinois - 1907 Missouri)
Original Member of the Missouri Commandery
Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States**

**By
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John Pope Baker was born 24 July 1838 in Kaskaskia, Illinois, the son of David Jewett and Sarah

Tennery (Fairchild) Baker. David served as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Illinois and was one of the distinguished jurists of his day.

Shortly after getting married in 1819 David Jewett Baker relocated to Kaskaskia, then the Illinois State Capitol, where he began a law practice, became a Probate Judge of Randolph County in 1820, and in 1829 was appointed by Governor Ninian Edwards to the United States Senate to fill a vacancy. In 1833, David was appointed by President Andrew Jackson as United States District Attorney for the State of Illinois—the state, then constituted one district and served in that office until 1841. In 1844 he moved the family to Alton where he was known as one of the best attorneys in Illinois and became one of the strongest anti-slavery leaders of pioneer Illinois. He spoke and wrote against slavery and assisted Governor Coles in distributing thousands of anti-slavery tracts, helping defeat a proposition of calling a convention to amend the state constitution to permit slavery. Feelings ran so high against David for his part in defeating the slavery constitutional convention that Thomas Reynolds, Chief Justice of the Illinois State Supreme Court, attacked him on the streets of Kaskaskia. The men reportedly dueled with canes and bowie knives, and both were marked for life afterward. Mr. Baker's life was threatened many times because of his opposition to slavery. David Jewett Baker was a supporter of the Republican Party in 1854; following its inception in Ripon, Wisconsin and Jackson, Michigan and before it was formed in Illinois. He was chairman of the first Illinois Republican State Central Committee of which Lincoln was a member. In 1858 he served as a member of the committee that drafted the resolutions debated by Lincoln and Stephen A. Douglas. Mr. Baker's influence was reflected in the lives of his children. Four distinguished sons were educated in law. The Baker family was closely identified with Lincoln, the formation of the Republican Party and the war to save the Union. David Jewett Baker and his sons attained distinction, with a consciousness of solidarity in the family relation, and of their obligation to maintain the family honor unsullied.

John Pope Baker graduated from Shurtleff College in 1856, studied law with his father, and was admitted to the bar in 1859. On 23 March 1861, he was appointed by President Lincoln as Second Lieutenant First US Dragoons, and placed on duty in Washington, DC. He was promoted to First Lieutenant on May 13, 1861, fought at the Battle of Bull Run 21 July 1861, and was promoted Captain First US Cavalry on 17 July 1862. He served on staff duty at the headquarters of the Sixth Army Corps in the Army of the Potomac, and also on staff duty as Inspector General of Savannah, Georgia in the early part of 1865. He was brevetted as Major US Army on 9 April 1864, "for gallant and meritorious service" at the battle of Pleasant Hill, Louisiana, and as Lieutenant-Colonel on 13 March 1865, "for gallant and meritorious service during the war."

John was then married to Mary Todd Wallace (born a1843 Springfield, Illinois), who was the daughter of William S. and Francis Jane (Todd) Wallace. Francis (Todd) Wallace was a sister of Mary Ann Todd who married Abraham Lincoln (16th president of the United States). After the close of the war, he served with his regiment at the headquarters of General Sheridan in Louisiana and, in 1865, was ordered from there to the Pacific Coast spending three years in Nevada and Oregon campaigning against the Indians and resigned his commission in 1868.

After his retirement from the Army, he moved to Springfield, Illinois and became one of the proprietors and associate editor with his brother, Edward Lewis Baker, of the "Illinois State Journal." Edward Lewis Baker married Julia Edwards, daughter of Ninian Wirt and Elizabeth P. (Todd) Edwards. Elizabeth P. (Todd) Edwards also was a sister of Mary Ann Todd who married Abraham Lincoln (16th president of the United States). John also was for a short time engaged in the grocery business in partnership with A.S. Edwards.

He was re-appointed on 8 December 1882 as Major and Paymaster US Army and was stationed at Leavenworth, Kansas; Omaha, Nebraska; Santa Fe and Albuquerque, New Mexico; Fort Sam Houston; Texas; and finally St. Louis, Missouri. He served through the Spanish American War being on duty at several ports in the United States and Cuba. He was advanced to Lieutenant-Colonel and placed on the retired list on 23 April 1904. He participated in the first battle of Bull Run, West

Haven, Virginia, the Seven Days Battle, Crampton's Gap, Antietam, Fredericksburg, Sabine Pass, Louisiana, campaigns of West Louisiana, and Red River, Vermillion Bayou and Sabine Cross Roads, where he was wounded. His service was in the Sixth Army Corps, Army of the Potomac, in the Army of the Shenandoah under Sheridan, Aid-de-Camp on the staff of General E. Moore, and in campaigns against hostile Indians in Nevada and Oregon. After his retirement, Colonel Baker resided in St. Louis, Missouri.

On 30 December 1883, he was elected an Original Companion of the California Commandery of the Military Order of the Loyal Legion of the United States (MOLLUS Insignia Number 4430) and was a Charter member of the Kansas Commandery in 1886. He later became a member of the Missouri Commandery in 1902.

John Pope Baker died 14 February 1907 in St. Louis, Missouri. His wife, Mary, died September 1911. Both are buried in Springfield, Illinois. Colonel Baker was held in high esteem by companions in arms, who placed a laurel wreath upon the flag-covered casket as a fitting tribute to a gallant soldier and a generous, true-hearted friend.

Children:

1) Mary Baker, born 13 September 1866 Nevada, married 2 February 1887 Walter E. Patterson (born Illinois, died Illinois 1910). She was living in Springfield, Illinois as of 1930.

Children:

1.1) Frances W. Patterson, born 1893 Illinois.

1.2) Mabel F. Patterson, born 1902 Illinois, married Ralph W. Wehrenberg (born 1901 Illinois).

Children:

1.2.1) Ralph W. Wehrenberg, Jr., born 1925 Illinois.

1.2.2) John P. Wehrenberg, born 1927 Illinois.

1.2.3) Mary Jean Wehrenberg, born 1929 Illinois.

1.3) Florence J. Patterson, born 1906 Illinois.

2) Wallace Fairchild Baker was born 25 December 1868 in Springfield, Illinois, appointed at large United States Army 2 July 1899 as Federal Paymaster's Assistant with the rank of Lieutenant QMC, promoted 1 July 1916 to Captain QMC, paymaster's clerk stationed at Zamboango, Phillipine Islands in 1917, promoted 22 January 1918 to Major QMC, transferred to the Federal Department July 1920, promoted 14 October 1920 Major of the Federal Department, and retired 3 November 1922. For service in the United States Army, he received campaign medals for Sioux Indian Wars 1890, at Rose Bud, South Dakota against the Brule Sioux; Spanish American War Service 1898; Cuban Occupation 1898; Mexican Campaign 1914 at Vera Cruz; and World War 1918. Additionally, he was awarded the Order of the Striped Tiger (WWI) decoration from the Peking, China Government, which only four were ever presented to American servicemen. He married 16 August 1899 Helen Lowe Rowley [(born 6 July 1883 Missouri, the daughter of George Augustus Rowley, born 1840 New York, Brevet Captain, 1st Lieutenant Second Infantry USA, MOLLUS Companion, Missouri Commandery, Insignia Number 7384, died 21 March 1896 St. Louis, Missouri)]. Wallace was elected a hereditary member of the MOLLUS Pennsylvania Commandery on 19 February 1941, Insignia Number 19339. He also was a member of the Military Order of Foreign Wars and World Wars. He died 26 February 1945 in St. Louis, Missouri.

Children:

2.1) John Pope Baker, II was born 28 August 1901 in St. Louis, Missouri, attended the University of Manila, Phillipine Islands, worked in advertising for Woolf Brother Inc.,

and was a writer and artist for the Post Dispatch in St Louis, Missouri. On 21 May 1940, he was elected a hereditary member of the MOLLUS Pennsylvania Commandery, Insignia Number 19283. He also was a member of the Missouri Society of Colonial Wars and Missouri Society of the Sons of the Revolution (SR Missouri State President 1964-1965), and designed the Sons of the Revolution Minuteman Medal. He died 29 August 1974 in St. Louis, Missouri.

3) Francis Jewett Baker, born 14 June 1871 Illinois, was engaged in the government service as a paymaster's clerk stationed at Zamboango, Phillipine Islands in 1917.

4) Mabel Baker, born 24 December 1873 Illinois.

5) Florence Baker, born 8 January 1876 Illinois.

6) Lincoln Todd Baker, born 13 January 1879 Illinois, married 13 January 1905 to Lylia ? (born 1893 Missouri), was elected a hereditary member of the MOLLUS Missouri Commandery on 3 December 1910, Insignia Number 16394. He worked as a milk inspector for the city of St. Louis, Missouri and was living in St. Louis as of 1920.

Children:

6.1) Mary E. Baker, b.1907 Missouri.

6.2) Jane L. Baker, b.1912 Missouri.

For Additional Baker Family Data in Illinois and their involvement with Lincoln please see:

http://www.saintmarymo.com/SaintMaryMO/history_of_saint_mary_missouri.htm

and

<http://www.iltrails.org/randolph/biosb.htm>

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Sources:

1) Missouri Commandery of the MOLLUS, Circular No. 326, June 1, 1907.

2) Membership Records of the Missouri Commandery of MOLLUS.

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