

**BAKER, ALBERT H. AND FAMILY**

In 1912, after more than thirty years absence, I returned to Baroda for a short visit. This was one of the charges of my first circuit in India. I was the only missionary representative of our Church in those early days in all Gujarat. The head of the circuit was nominally Ahmedabad, but I lived in a little sandy hamlet just across the Sabarmati River, and which was called after the river Sabarmati, sandy river. There were perhaps a hundred families of English and anglo-Indian families housed in brick cottages that had been built by the ~~Bombay, Baroda and~~ Rajputana Malwa State Railway for the accommodation of their employees, Sabarmati was the terminus of this Ry. and the district loc. Supt. had his head quarters here. The Bombay, Baroda and Central India Ry. passed through this place and a district traffic manager resided here. Both of these men and their families attended our English services. My work was largely English and the English congregations furnished my support and some of the members were very active in assisting me in the work for the Gujarati ~~at~~ people. Baroda is about three hundred miles from Bombay and my circuit extended from there south to ~~the~~ Palsar, about a hundred miles north of Bombay.

From Ahmedabad to Bombay I had a first class pass on the Bombay, Baroda and Central India Ry. and on the Rajasthan, Malwa State Ry a first class pass and an unwritten permission to travel on anything that went on the rails from a hand car to a first class Ry. Carriage. I think I slept more nights on the Ry. than in a house. There were days when I would start out on a hand car and travel to some English appointment, preach to perhaps a dozen or fifteen Ry. employes and government clerks, <sup>and</sup> telegraph operators; then board a freight for the next station. Having finished my services here I might next ride on an engine, etc. I so planned my return journey that I could have a night's rest in a first class Ry. Carriage. This made a very full program, yet I found time to do some village work.

It is of this work I wish to speak at this time. The field was considered a very difficult one to work and the prospect of conversions among the native people exceedingly remote. I used to long and pray for the advent of the day when we could count our converts by the thousands, but fear my faith did not measure up to my petitions. Yet I had an unwavering expectation that, while I might not see it, India would some day become a Christian nation.

There was much in the life of the people to indicate that

the preaching of the gospel made <sup>not</sup> much of an impression upon them. They seemed to treat it with indifference.

They were so superstitious that often our efforts to do them good were treated with suspicion because of the fear that any consideration of our message would bring upon them the displeasure of the gods.

When the Ry. was first open for ~~the~~ traffic it was not uncommon for women of different castes to bring their baby daughters as an offering to the engine which they mistook for a god. The head light was thought to be his fiery eye, which was shut by day and open at night. The authorities used great care at the Ry. depots to prevent these sacrifices being made, but at a distance from the depots little girl babies were frequently found dead upon the tracks where they had been cut and mangled by the train. By detecting who committed the crime and bringing the perpetrators to justice ~~gradually~~ gradually stamped out the custom.

I was calling at the home of the district traffic manager of the Bombay, Baroda & Central India Ry. when he asked me if I could not furnish him some Christian Ry. printmen who would be able to withstand the attacks of a robber tribe that was giving them great

trouble by driving the pointsmen away; and on some occasions they beat just the pointsmen to death. We used to protect our homes by hiring from the headman of the thieves' village a thief for this purpose. We were safe just so long as he was retained for this service. He was supposed to watch at night. One night the gentleman with whom I boarded found our watchman asleep and discharged him. The next night our house was broken into and each of us was robbed. Though we searched diligently for our lost goods we could not get any trace of them. Finally it was concluded to see the robber chief again. He advised hiring another watchman and the following day every thing was found in the very places we had looked <sup>for</sup> but had failed to find anything. An Engineer boasted that robbers came to his quarters they would get cold lead for their trouble. Soon after one night he was awakened by a tall black man standing by his cot. He ran <sup>in</sup> and under his pillow for his revolver, but it was not there. The man said to him, very quietly, "Dahib, We are here. You wanted to see us. I leave your firing weapon, don't try to find it. I shall keep it to think of you by." The engineer was permitted to sit up, <sup>on a bench</sup> as he looked about him he saw a number of men relating

from among his belongings such things as took  
 this fancy, including his money. His servant was  
 lashed to a beam that supported the roof. He was  
 then commanded to lie down and was lashed to  
 the cot. The leader then said to him, "Sahib, we worship  
 Kali and must draw blood. I will just draw a little  
 from you for I want Master's favor". He was as good  
 as his word and after a very slight incision in the  
 arm, just deep ~~enough~~ enough to draw blood he  
 put his knife away and he and his gang took  
 their departure. The engineer and servant were  
 found several hours after by a government  
 servant whose business it was to carry his  
 mail and do official errands. ~~The~~ ~~thing~~ ~~was~~ ~~done~~ ~~in~~ ~~the~~ ~~presence~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~engineer~~ ~~and~~ ~~his~~ ~~servant~~ ~~and~~ ~~the~~ ~~body~~ ~~was~~ ~~placed~~ ~~on~~ ~~one~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~rails~~ ~~of~~ ~~the~~ ~~tracks~~ ~~and~~ ~~should~~ ~~it~~ ~~not~~ ~~be~~ ~~seen~~ ~~by~~ ~~a~~ ~~passing~~ ~~train~~ ~~the~~ ~~chanting~~ ~~engine~~ ~~was~~ ~~sure~~ ~~to~~ ~~run~~ ~~over~~ ~~it~~. On night ~~the~~ ~~train~~ ~~passed~~ ~~our~~ ~~village~~ ~~and~~ ~~leaving~~ ~~a~~ ~~trail~~ ~~several~~

(6)

native tents, cut long, deep gashes lengthwise and crosswise on the bodies of the men and then rubbed salt into these wounds.

The majority of the people were quiet and unobtrusive, but very much averse to the Christian religion, and they regarded it as simply a means of reaching their tent.

In spite of these hindrances to conversion, some conversions about twelve persons were recorded, which were the waves cast.

When I reported these conversions to the commandant it was regarded as a very good result.

The Russian Consul mentioned to me that he had said to me regarding this good work and his estimate that was set upon it by my "brother" in Christ, "I see, I see, you will go to the same course as we do with no other report than that the work will be done in a future." I believe I should not be regarded as being a very successful missionary.

I am, however, very glad to see that the work is being done in a quiet and unobtrusive manner.

The work is being done in a quiet and unobtrusive manner.

It is a good thing to see a little of the work done in a quiet and unobtrusive manner.

In this regard, the work is being done in a quiet and unobtrusive manner.

winning of this paper thousands have been converted  
in a single year with the aid of the exhibition  
of numerous maps. It is here baptisms more than  
1000 in a day.

If I were asked of this people I should  
answer

most people of this people are good people I know  
ten heart with the same people

his desire to be a good man to pray. It was  
sinner are people, make people

Talk with me and you will see that these  
areas would sink under these burdens were it not

that they have a heart. They would lose  
heart and utterly fail were it not for the vision of the

coming of the Lord and the work of the Holy Spirit  
in the hearts of the people.

organization of the people in the use of  
means. Certain it is most missionaries are yet

guardians of the people. It is the duty of the  
missionary to be a teacher and a worker.

or her help in the business of the people. It is  
the duty of the people to be a worker and a teacher.

leaders do. I have seen good work done by  
a class of preachers, and I wish where you are

in my employment. I come to conference



year ago - considered one my friend." I  
 heard Bishop Mc ... to a class of young men, of  
 whom the ... was one, "I expect ... to be converted  
 under my sermon." There was also the difference  
 between the two treatments of ancient and present  
 day history. Several of us went to Bishop ...  
 for ... we could ...  
 souls converted under my sermon. I think  
 none of us troubled the other ...  
 We organize the class meeting the ...  
 even the day school ... into ...  
 tributary ... toward the ...  
 people to Christ

Having ... we ...  
 ... will not run themselves and we must  
 run them, but there ...  
 run. We ... we ...  
 ...  
 ...  
 ...

The results are seen in the ...  
 ...

REV. ALBERT HAMILTON BAKER

Sailed for South India in November 1880. Retired in 1913.  
Died April 4, 1924

Albert H. Baker was born in East Blackstone, Mass., April  
26, 1854

Graduated from High School, Ashland, Mass., in 1875

Appointed ~~anniversary~~ <sup>missionary</sup> of the Board in November 1880, sailing  
for South India immediately  
Arrived in India in January 1881

Member South India Conference, 1881

Married Miss Rachel Sorby at Hyderabad, India, December 5, 1883

Fields -

Ahmedabad, November 1881 -

Nagpur, December 1882 -

Madras, November 1884 -

Bangalore, St. John's Hill Tamil Mission, February 1888 -

Kolar, February 1891 -

Bangalore, Richmondtown, St. John's Hill, December 1892 -  
December 1896

Bangalore, Presiding Elder, Madras District, February 1889  
to December 1896

In the United States December 1896 - January 1904

Member Vermont Conference, 1896 - November 1903

Kolar, January 1904 -

Hyderabad and Secunderabad - Vernacular Circuit - December  
1905 - December 1906

Hyderabad Circuit, December 1906 - 1908

Madras - Superintendent Madras District, and Vepery  
Church, January 1909 -

Madras - Supt. Madras District, English Circuit, and  
Publishing House Orphanage, December 1910 - March  
1912

Delegate to General Conference 1896 and 1912

Did not return to India after the General Conference of  
1912

Retired in 1913

Died at Watts Flats, New York, April 4, 1924

April 9, 1924

M.A.N.

*Prepared June - 1911*

ALBERT HAMILTON BAKER was born in Portland, Maine, April 26, 1854. He was appointed a missionary of the Board of Foreign Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church in ~~1880~~ November, 1880 and arrived in India the following January. He immediately entered upon evangelistic work in the South India Conference. On December 5, 1883 he was married at Hyderabad to Rachel Sorby, of Irish parentage, a native of Shoncliff, England. He filled appointments successively at Ahmedabad, Nagpur, Madras, Bangalore, Kolar, and Bangalore again. In the meantime he was also appointed Presiding Elder of the Madras District in 1889 and held the position until 1896. In that year he came to this country as a delegate from South India to the General Conference. Mrs. Baker's health at this time was such that he could not return immediately to the field, and, as he wrote, "After her recovery I felt that I could not return until I had a clear call from God to do so." While awaiting this second "call" Mr. Baker filled various appointments in the Vermont Conference and finally returned to the field again in January, 1904. After being stationed at Kolar and at Hyderabad he was made Superintendent of the Madras District again in January, 1909, and since then has lived in Madras. His appointments for the present year include the following: Superintendent of the Madras District, in charge of the English Circuit in Madras, and of the Publishing House of Madras. Mr. Baker was on the field without any furlough from 1881 to 1896, and he has had no furlough since his return to the field in 1904. It is probable that he and his family will leave the field on furlough in 1912. The pressure of his work in the last few years has prevented his leaving sooner. When Mr. Baker was at Kolar in 1905, Bishop Oldham wrote of him as follows:

"The Rev. A. H. Baker, a well known New England man. Genial, Sunny tempered, cheery of speech, overflowing with kindness and deeply religious, he is the very man to attend to the spiritual interest of the mission. Mr. Baker has endeared himself to Christians and non-Christians alike. When it was recently whispered that he was to be transferred from Kolar, I received lengthy petitions signed by nearly every prominent citizen in the town and district, Christians, Hindus, and Mohammedans, asking that he be allowed to stay."

MISSIONARY SOCIETY

— OF THE —

METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

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HOMER EATON, Treasurer.  
E. R. SMITH, Editor, "Gospel in All Lands."

CABLE ADDRESS: MISSIONS.

150 FIFTH AVENUE,

NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 10, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER:

The Secretaries have constant need of the information asked for in this circular. It was sent to all our foreign missionaries in 1896, and the replies are on file. But new missionaries go to the field, and additional information is needed from those who kindly made response five years ago.

Will you fill out the blanks for yourself and family and return to this office promptly?

Yours sincerely,

THE MISSIONARY SECRETARIES.

(Please answer these questions AS NEARLY AS POSSIBLE with the data at hand.)

1. Place and date of answer Kolar, Mysore Province, India, 25th May, 1904
2. Full name of missionary and date of birth Albert Hamilton Baker, Born in  
Portland, Me., U.S.A., 26th April, 1854
3. Nationality American
4. Date of appointment to our work November, 1880
5. Bishop appointing Bishop S. M. Merrill
6. Date of departure from home to engage in our work November, 1880
7. Date of arrival on the mission field January, 1881
8. Has service under this Society been continuous since your first appointment? If not, when, why, and how long was it interrupted? From September 1896 to November 1903 I served  
as pastor in the Vermont Conference, Mrs. Baker's ill health  
was the reason I did not return in 1896. After recovery I  
felt I should not return unless I had a clear call from God to do so.
9. Fields of labor and dates (month and year) New England & South India Conference: Jan. '81 to Dec. '81, Ahme-  
dabad, India; '82, '83, Nagpur, India; '84, '85, '86, Madras, India, Black-  
stone, Mass., as a supply. Town Church; '87, '88, '89, Bangalore, India, Memorial Church; '89, '90, '91,  
'92, '93, '94, '95, '96, Presiding Elder Madras District, India; Vermont Con-  
ference: '96, '97, Thetford Centre, supplied at West Fairlee; '98, Thet-  
ford Center, supplied at North Thetford; '99, Thetford Center, supplied at  
West Fairlee. ~~1900 West Fairlee & Cambridge~~
10. Present residence Kolar town, Mysore Province, India

1901-1903,  
Fairfax

11. Employment at the present time *Missionary in Charge, Kolar Industrial Mission.*

12. Date of marriage *December 4th, 1883*

13. Wife's full name *Rachel (Sorby) Baker.*

14. Date of wife's birth *July 8th, 1862 at Shoncliff, England, of Irish parentage.*

15. Children's full names and date of birth respectively (and date of death, if any have died) *Albert Hamilton Baker, born 26th September, 1884; Richard Sorby Baker, born 5th Dec., 1891, died <sup>4th</sup> Oct., 1894; Edmunds Baker, born 6th Oct., 1897; Oswald Baker, born 2nd July, 1899.*

*Places of Birth and Death.*

*Albert Hamilton Baker, born at Nagpore, India.*

*Richard Sorby Baker, born at Bangalore, ~~India~~ India; died at Newton, Mass., U. S. A.*

*Edmunds Baker, born at Shelton Center, Vt., U. S. A.*

*Oswald Baker, " " " " " "*

RETURN HOME.

16. Names of persons returning, dates, and reasons of return (if more than one return state these particulars in each case)

...

17. Dates of leaving to return to the field, and names of persons returning

18. Name and address of person who is your representative in the United States in family matters

*Already furnished Dr. Benton*

19. Code name to indicate said representative in cable messages

*Duto*

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NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 10, 1901.

DEAR BROTHER:

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Yours sincerely,

THE MISSIONARY SECRETARIES.

(Please answer these questions AS NEARLY AS POSSIBLE with the data at hand.)

1. Place and date of answer *New York, 2nd December, 1903.*
2. Full name of missionary and date of birth *Albert H. Baker, 26th April, 1854.*
3. Nationality *American*
4. Date of appointment to our work *October 20th, 1903.*
5. Bishop appointing .....
6. Date of departure from home to engage in our work *2nd December, 1903*
7. Date of arrival on the mission field .....
8. Has service under this Society been continuous since your first appointment? If not, when, why, and how long was it interrupted? *First appointed 1881. Took charge in the U.S.A. on account of ill health in my family from 1896 to 1903*
9. Fields of labor and dates (month and year) *from 1896 to 1900, Rutland Center Circuit; from 1900 to 1903 Fairfax, Vermont.*
10. Present residence *Fairfax, Vermont.*

11. Employment at the present time

12. Date of marriage

13. Wife's full name *Rachel Baker*

14. Date of wife's birth *1862*

15. Children's full names and date of birth respectively (and date of death, if any have died) *Albert Hamilton, 19 years; Edmunds, 6 years; Oswald, four years. One, the second boy, Richard, died in 1895.*

#### RETURN HOME.

16. Names of persons returning, dates, and reasons of return (if more than one return state these particulars in each case)

17. Dates of leaving to return to the field, and names of persons returning

18. Name and address of person who is your representative in the United States in family matters *Mrs. Annie*

*T. Mellen, Walford, Mass.*

19. Code name to indicate said representative in cable messages *Mellen.*



FINANCIAL.

20. Salary, past and present .....

21. Received this year for children ..

22. Special aid asked, dates and amounts

23. Aid granted, dates and amounts

24. Outgoing expenses each time

25. Home-coming expenses each time ...

26. Home salary, for self and family

27. Name and address of person who is your representative in the United States in business matters *A. West*

*A. West, Jr.*  
28. Code name to indicate said representative in cable messages *Ja*

A Primary or Christian Village School, \$	50 a year
A house for the above	50
A Pastor-Teacher	50 a year
Preachers of various grades ..	60 to 200
Houses for above workers	50 to 250
Boarding Scholarships	20
High School Scholarships	30
Bible Training School Scholarships—	
Single men	30
Married men	50
Teachers in Boarding, High or Bible	
Training Schools	40 to 300

**Madras District**  
**South India Conference**  
Methodist Episcopal Church

ALBERT H. BAKER  
Superintendent

Upery, Madras, INDIA.  
11th May, 1911.

Dear Dr. Leonard,

When we came to India we gave you the address of our son as Albert H. Baker, Greenwich Academy. I should long ago have let you know of the change in his address, but it has escaped my mind to do so. He is now the Boston District Route Agent for the American Express and his home address is, Albert H. Baker, Jr., 55 Morris Street, Everett, Mass.

Yours obediently,

*Albert H. Baker*

Ex. Com. Jan. 22, 1931

3. Word has been received of the death on January 14, 1931, of Mrs. Rachel Baker, one of our retired missionaries from India, and widow of Rev. Albert H. Baker. More than 57 years ago, Mrs. Baker went to India with her parents, where in 1883, she was married to Mr. Baker, who had been appointed one of our missionaries in 1880. Together they served within the bounds of the South India Conference for 30 years, until their retirement in 1913. They were effective in evangelistic work. Mr. Baker served as pastor and teacher, and as Presiding Elder during his years of missionary activity. Mr. Baker died April 4, 1924, since which time Mrs. Baker has made her home with her children in this country. A letter of sympathy and appreciation of the service of Mrs. Baker has been sent by the Secretaries to the family in behalf of the Board.

ALBERT HAMILTON BAKER

Rev. Albert H. Baker, for thirty-five years a missionary in India, engaged largely in Nanjeleshia work, and was district superintendent for several years of Madras District, an extensive district with large city and country stations. He had charge of English-speaking work in Madras as well as the native missions, and superintended the Publishing House and orphanage as well.

Photographs from this  
file have not been  
included but are  
available upon request.  
For more information  
please contact  
[research@gcah.org](mailto:research@gcah.org)