

Baker, The Dark Horse

Is Not Candidate, But Might
Break Convention Deadlock

By Robert Talley
NEA Service Writer

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CLEVELAND—A quiet-mannered, little man with a luminous smile, who has spent 30 of his 61 years in public life, puffs contentedly on a big pipe in his law offices here, apparently indifferent to the fact that he is being discussed throughout the nation as a "dark horse" presidential candidate. Moreover, he insists that he is not a candidate and does not wish to be considered one.

He is Newton D. Baker, Woodrow Wilson's secretary of war back in the hectic days of a dozen years ago. Of the presidency, Baker has said: "The president is the loneliest and most defenseless prisoner in the world, and I doubt very much whether any president from Washington down has ever spent as many happy hours in four years as I now habitually spend in each month as I practice law and grub potatoes."

Baker is making no effort to get the Democratic nomination, but his closest friends say he will accept it, if it is offered to him. After all, a man is merely human—and a chance at the presidency of the United States is nothing to be treated lightly.

Since the Wilson administration retired from Washington on March 4, 1921, Baker has been Cleveland's "first citizen." He came back here, resumed the practice of law, and has taken a leading part in civic and public affairs. He still is a national figure. President Coolidge named him to the World Court at The Hague and President Hoover appointed him to the Wickersham Commission.

Except for a few gray hairs and deeper lines in his face, the Baker of today is little different from the Secretary of War Baker who spent billions at the rate of \$1,500,000 an hour back in 1918. At 61, he still is slender and small of stature, standing only a little over five feet in height and weighing about 120 pounds. He still has that fighting air, that whimsical smile, that gracious manner, still wears those horn-rimmed glasses that give him an owl-like appearance of wisdom.

That ever-present pipe still is one of his most distinguishing features. His friends say he seems to smoke it every waking hour. He puffs on it constantly while talking with you in his private office here.

The walls of this office are covered with framed and autographed photos of Wilson, Pershing, Foch, Joffre, Clemenceau, Lloyd George and other world notables of the war days.

Baker shows you one of his most prized exhibits. It is a framed copy of a printed story of his life, sent out by a newspaper service just in advance of his inspection trip to France in 1918. At the top of the first page its boldly printed caption explained: "For release in case Secretary Baker's ship is sunk by a submarine."

Baker gets a kick out of this. Few men get the chance to read their own obituary.

One of the most intellectual and scholarly men in American public life, Baker's recreations are almost wholly mental. He does not play golf, he cares little for sports, takes practically no exercise.

An avid reader and a master of languages, he speaks Greek, Latin, Hebrew and Arabic in the original. He does not care for bridge, seldom attends a theater, infrequently goes to a concert, although he is a lover of music.

Today, as when he first went to Washington, his hobby is flower gardening. Old-timers recall that when he took over the job in 1918 as head of the nation's milled flint he was twitted for confessing his love for flowers, nicknamed "Pansy" Baker because he had a big jar of fresh pansies on his desk.

Today, he grows flowers in a beautiful garden at his home in Shaker Heights, fashionable Cleveland suburb. A golf course adjoins the garden where Baker is tolling amid his fragrant blossoms.

enough money to make a trip to Europe.

On the ship returning from abroad, Martin L. Foran, a Cleveland politician, and a fellow passenger were having a hot argument on Irish home rule. Baker joined the argument, helped Foran win it. He so impressed Foran with his ability that Foran invited him to move to Cleveland and join his law firm.

A short time later Foran found himself unable to deliver a political speech because of illness and sent the youthful and undersized Baker to substitute for him. Baker "stood the crowd on its ears" and from that day his reputation as a political debater grew.

Baker passed into politics under the wing of Mayor Tom Johnson, served three terms as city solicitor and succeeded Johnson as mayor, being elected first in 1911 and again in 1913.

At the Baltimore convention in 1912 Baker led a successful fight to release the Ohio delegation from the unit rule that bound it to Judson Harmon and thereby won 18 votes for Wilson. The latter never forgot. As president-elect in 1913 he offered Baker a cabinet post as secretary of interior, but Baker declined. When Secretary of War Garrison retired in March, 1915, Wilson offered Baker this job and Baker accepted.

Baker had no military training or experience—he told Wilson that he had not even played with lead soldiers when a boy. Wilson, however, wanted an executive—not a soldier—and Baker fitted the bill.

On the very day Baker took office, Villa and his Mexican bandits raided Columbus, N. M. Pershing's expedition into Mexico and the concentration of 100,000 American troops on the Mexican border followed.

Europe was in flames and it was clear the war would soon involve the United States. Baker, who loved flowers, was a pacifist—but, as he told reporters, "I love peace so well that I am willing to fight for it." He began laying plans for a war that he knew was sure to come.

On March 4, 1917, Congress adjourned without passing either the deficiency bill or the army appropriation bill. Though war was declared on April 6, billions needed for the army were not authorized until June 15 and the money did not become available until July 1. Thus for a month before the war and for two months thereafter the War Department was without funds.

But Baker went nobly ahead. In April, contracts were let for 13 officers' training camps and in May for 32 cantonments, a matter of \$800,000,000.

"I assume full responsibility," Baker told assistants when they warned him that he was violating the law by spending money before it was available.

He also fathered the selective service act, as opposed to the volunteer system on the one hand and downright conscription on the other.

Baker chose Pershing, whom he had never met face to face, as commander-in-chief of the A. E. F. He sent him to France with only two orders. The first was "Go there"; the second, "Return." Lessons of the Union army in the Civil War had taught Baker that too much civilian interference with the military was dangerous.

The allies had expected not more than 500,000 American troops in France by the fall of 1918. Baker had 2,000,000 there and several millions more under arms in this country. Frederick Palmer, in his book, says that if the war had continued Baker would have had 5,000,000 men in France in 1919. The task was gigantic... every one of these millions of men had to be recruited, clothed, equipped, trained and fed.

In 1918, the War department spent 12 billion dollars; in 1919, the amount was 18 billions. There was a time when Baker was spending money at the rate of \$1,500,000 every hour.

The war won, Baker declined President Wilson's invitation to accompany him to the peace conference in 1919 and remained at home to direct the vast program of demobilization. There followed, under Republican administration, the long series of congressional investigations in an attempt to prove rumors of huge "war grafts."

After several years of investigation costing \$3,000,000, the records showed only four cases of culpability—the most serious of which was the theft of an army truck worth \$2400 by a man in Texas.



HE LIKES HIS PIPE AND BOOKS.



FLOWER GARDENING HIS HOBBY.



NOW CLEVELAND'S 'FIRST CITIZEN'

are leaving for an extended visit in Missouri.

Mrs. Walter Furman and children, Dale and Deva, Mr. and Mrs. McCoy and sons, Mack and Warren, and Mrs. Charles McFall were Imbler people visiting in Alice Thursday.

The Priscilla club met at the home of Mrs. Alvin Westenskow in Imbler Tuesday. The next meeting will be held at the park in La Grande if weather permits. If not, they will meet with Mrs. Buchanan at 1009 First street.

As Mrs. Buchanan has completed her work as Observer correspondent from Alice, Mrs. Carl Fuller, who for many years looked after news from that locality again takes up the pen. Alice residents are asked to see that last Thursday. The next meeting Mrs. Fuller bears of interesting news items from that part of the valley.

Mrs. Harrie Chamberlain (left) of Toledo, O., and Miss Edith N. Stanton (right) of Los Angeles, Cal., are seen here after their election as president and first vice president, respectively, of the National Young Women's Christian Association. The organization recently held a convention in Minneapolis, Minn. Membership throughout the United States exceeds 600,000.

Mrs. Roy Redman, Mrs. Lawson Webster, and Mrs. Frank Gibson entertained at dinner last Sunday at the latter's home in honor of Mr. and Mrs. Otis Buchanan and Junior, who are moving to La Grande and Mr. and Mrs. W. A. Buchanan who

New National Y. W. C. A. Heads



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GRAPEFRUIT	6 (2) \$1.00	Red & White	
APRICOTS	4 (2 1/2) \$1.00	TOMATO JUICE	
PEACHES	5 (2 1/2) \$1.00	Red & White	10 for \$1.00
PEARS	4 (2 1/2) \$1.00	MILK	19 Tall Cans \$1.00
PINEAPPLE	5 (2 1/2) \$1.00	Red & White	
PINEAPPLE	10 Buffet \$1.00	TOMATO SOUP	
FRUIT SALAD	5 (1) \$1.00	Red & White	16 for \$1.00

BLUE & WHITE

APRICOTS	5 (2 1/2) \$1.00	VEGETABLES	
GRAPEFRUIT	7 (2) \$1.00	RED & WHITE	
PEACHES	6 (2 1/2) \$1.00	ASPARAGUS	4 (2) \$1.00
PEARS	5 (2 1/2) \$1.00	BEANS	Cut 5 (2) \$1.00
PINEAPPLE	7 (2 1/2) \$1.00	BEANS	Asparagus Style 4 (2) \$1.00

FISH

RED & WHITE		BLUE & WHITE	
SALMON Red Sockeye	4 (1) \$1.00	SALMON	10 (1) \$1.00
SALMON	5 (1/2) \$1.00	OYSTERS	10 (1) \$1.00
SHRIMP	5 (1) \$1.00	SHRIMP	7 (1) \$1.00
CRAB MEAT	3 (1/2) \$1.00	Tuna Flakes	7 (1/2) \$1.00
TUNA	5 (1/2) \$1.00		

California DRY BEANS

Small White	20 lbs. \$1.00	Tomato Sauce	16 cans \$1.00
Limas	14 lbs. \$1.00		
Red Mex.	17 lbs. \$1.00	GREEN & WHITE	

CORN	White Sweet 14 No. 2 Cans \$1.00	CORN Golden	
PORK & BEANS	Van Camps 18 1-lb. Cans \$1.00	BEANS Cut Green	
OVEN BAKED PORK & BEANS	Red & White 6 28-oz. Cans \$1.00	PEAS	
		TOMATOES (Victor)	
		Assorted if you like.	
		10 Cans . . . \$1.00	

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