The Centennial of Armistice Day: A Remembrance of the Baker Botts Families Who Made a Difference in the First World War

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BAKER BOTTS

"The intellectual leap from a commemoration of the men trained here in 1917 to our duties as citizens today may seem a far-fetched one. But it's not. That's because, in a real sense, America's entry into World War I marked our first emergence on the international scene.

It was the beginning of a vast process which, despite a tragic setback during the years between World Wars I and II, continues to this day. That process has seen the United States attain, over the course of this century, a preeminence in world affairs unequaled by any other country in history—a preeminence which, uniquely, owes as much to the power of our ideals as to the force of our arms.

The men who trained here surely understood and embraced this truth. They believed that the United States was not just a great power but a good one. Their belief explains their lofty idealism, their profound patriotism, their selfless willingness to give all for their country.

The world may have changed dramatically since the 1st Officers' Camp opened here in May, 1917. But one thing most assuredly has not. And that is the idea of America—one that transcends our military might and material abundance. It is an idea that may be summed up in one word: freedom. And it is an idea as inspiring to us today as it was to the men who prepared for war here over eighty years ago."

Secretary James A. Baker, remarks given at Dedication of the First Officers' Training Camp Memorial, Saturday, December 4, 1999, Leon Springs, Texas

Dedication

This paper is dedicated to James A. Baker, Jr., Calvin Garwood, Palmer Hutcheson, Edwin Parker, Homer Bruce, Ralph Feagin, John Charles Townes, Jr., Robert A. Lovett, and the other men and women who served their country with distinction during the Great War. Their sacrifices, patriotism and selflessness continue to inspire us today.

Appreciation

This paper could not have been written help and assistance from many people. My wife Elizabeth patiently endured late nights and absences for me during its creation. Nora Zamora and Patti Wall made countless revisions. Laura Shoemaker and Margaret Wittenmyer proofread the paper several times. Charles Szalkowski gave the paper a proper peer review. Robert Downie, Annabel Turk, and Richard Pravata found many photographs that made the paper come to life. David Oelman and his aunt, Bettie Palmer Hutcheson Carrell, provided invaluable information about Palmer Hutcheson and his family. Tara Shockley of the Houston Bar Association helped find many of the HBA photographs of the soldiers. Stephen Hastings, Jose Lopez, and Polina Schultz helped us publish the paper. Nick Peacock helped with additional support. David Furlow and Judge Mark Davidson provided inspiration and valuable information on many of the people and events described. Lee Pecht from Rice Fondren Library and Kim Murphy from the Baker Institute for Public Policy shared additional documents from the Baker Family archives. I relied extensively on two invaluable historical resources: J. H. Freeman's "The People of Baker Botts" and Kate Kirkland, "Captain James A. Baker of Houston," which I consider to be one of the best books written on the history of the City of Houston.

Finally, Secretary James A. Baker III and Sandra Hatcher, his Executive Assistant, took time to read drafts of the paper, and provide guidance, correction, and encouragement. I'm indebted to both of them.

Thank you, all.

The Centennial of Armistice Day: A Remembrance of the Baker Botts Families Who Made a Difference in the First World War

by Bill Kroger[1]

On the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month of 1918, exactly 100 years ago, the armistice between the Allies of World War I and Germany was signed and took effect. The Great War – the most destructive war at that point in world history – was over. Massive celebration erupted around the world, from Trafalgar Square in London and Times Square in New York to Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington D. C., Congress Boulevard in Austin, and Main Street in front of the new Rice Hotel[2] in Houston.



Armistice Day, New York City

[1] Bill is a Partner of Baker Botts, and Chair of the Firm's Energy Litigation Practice Group. He also currently serves as Treasurer of the Houston Bar Association, and is a past Director of the State Bar of Texas. He also serves as Firm historian.

[2] Baker Botts handled the legal work for the financing of the Rice Hotel for Jesse Jones and the Rice Institute. The Rice Hotel was located at the corner of Texas and Main, where the old Capital of the Republic of Texas was located. It was opened on May 17, 1913, shortly before the events described in this paper.



Armistice Day, London

The Great War is one of the most significant events in the 178-year history of Baker Botts. It took place shortly after the firm's partners signed the first written partnership agreement. The war catapulted the firm's railroad and energy clients, along with its lawyers, to national prominence as the United States moved to a war economy. Baker Botts lawyers played important roles during the war in New York, Washington, D.C., Europe, and, of course, Houston. When the war was over, Baker Botts was no longer just a local Houston law firm; rather, it was now an institution with national legal and business interests and relationships. And the firm had global aspirations.

For several years, the Great War stretched and stressed Baker Botts and its families. Some fought in the trenches of the Western Front. Other worked for government agencies. Many Baker Botts families gave their time and talents to the local overall war effort.

Few discussed their sacrifices after the war was over. "When I was growing up, my father, a naturally reticent man, was not much given to recounting war stories" and "was the last man in the world to brag about his exploits 'over there,'" remembered his son, Secretary James A. Baker III.[3] There was no "Baker Botts in World War I," and few stories appeared in newspapers or bar reports. The *Office Review,* the great firm monthly newsletter that was started in 1920 and published every month for more than 50 years, had no articles about the war.

Here, then, is the story of the War as experienced by members of the Firm who were most directly affected.

James A. Baker, Jr. (1892-1973)



As 1917 began, James A. ("Jim") Baker, Jr.[4] had much to celebrate. He had graduated from Princeton University. He was hoping someday soon to marry Bonner Means, who he met at a high school dance in 1909.[5] They had a special bond. As Bonner later described, "It was love at first sight. And we were engaged for five

[3] Remarks By James A. Baker, III Given at Dedication of the First Officers' Training Camp Memorial, Saturday, December 4, 1999, Leon Springs, Texas ("Baker Remarks")
[4] This retelling of the story of Lt. Baker's Great War experiences relies heavily on Kate Kirkland's wonderful biography, *Captain James A. Baker of Houston,* pp. 257-262 (2012).
[5] Marguerite Johnston, *Houston, The Unknown City*, at 206.

and a half years."[6] Jim was planning to work for his family's law firm, headed by his father, Captain James A. Baker, and with a job, they could soon wed.

But the Great War changed their plans. When the United States entered the war, Jim had quickly enlisted. When he learned that he would receive his commission in August, he and Bonner accelerated plans for their wedding, which was celebrated on August 4, 1917 at Christ Church Cathedral.[7]



Bonner Means (Mrs. James A. Jr.) Baker, 1917. Private Collection.

He subsequently received his commission as a lieutenant in the 359th Infantry, part of the 90th Division of the U. S. Army. The couple settled in Leon Springs in San Antonio, where Lt. Baker received his training.

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[6] *Id*.

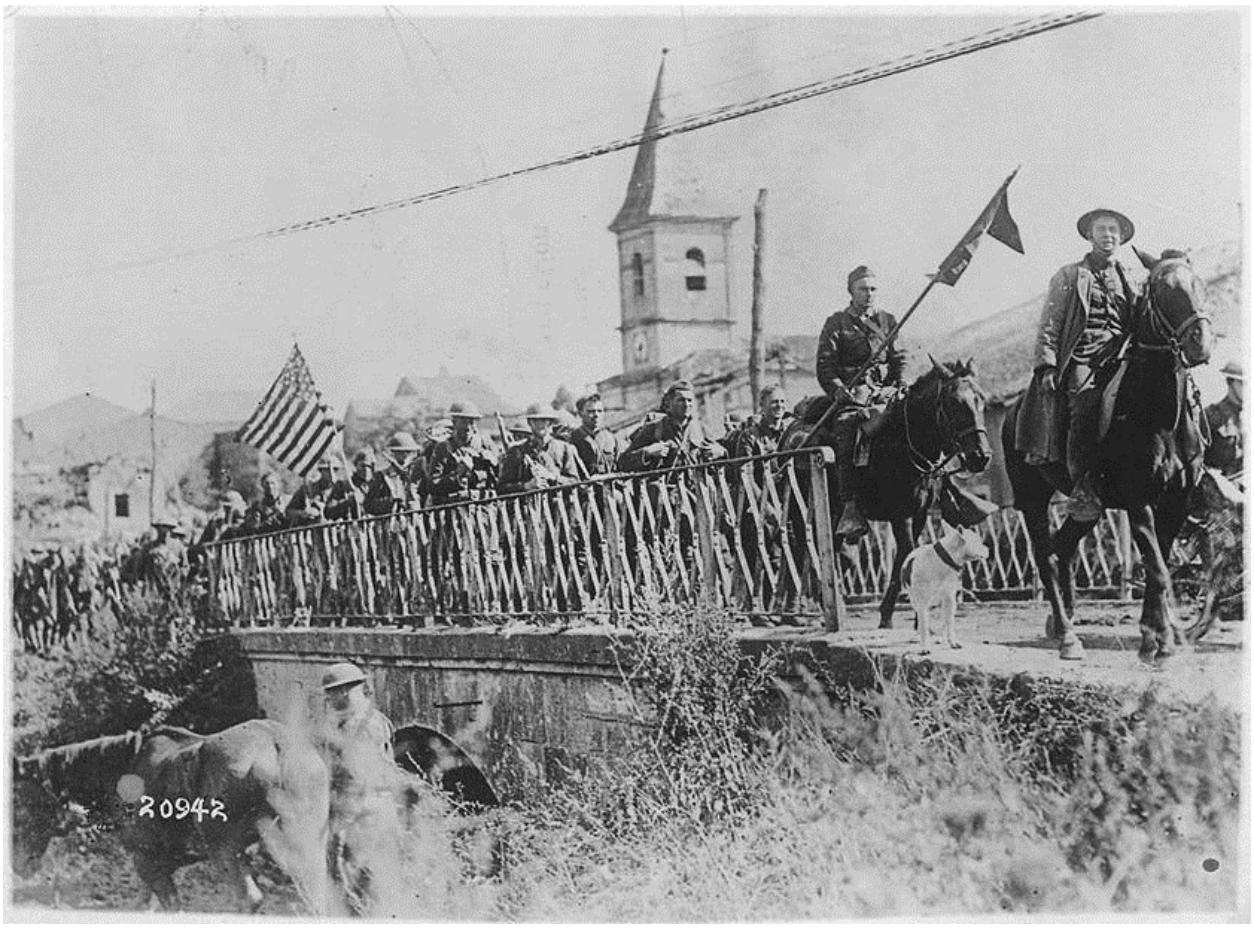
[7] Christ Church Cathedral has always been the historical Baker Botts church. It was started by William Fairfax Gray, Millie Gray, and Peter Gray, the founders of the Firm, in the 1840s. Most recently, the funeral of David Kirkland, a long-time Baker Botts partner, took place at the church.

In June 1918, after ten months of training, Lt. Baker and the other troops of the 359th were shipped to the Western Front. Bonner and the other members of the Baker family did not know if they would ever see him alive again.

Within a few weeks of his arrival in Europe, Lt. Baker and his Company I of the 359th Infantry saw heavy action. He fought in the St. Mihiel Offensive (September 12 - 16, 1918), a major battle in northeastern France led by General John J. Pershing. The St. Mihiel Offensive was the first and only offensive launched solely by the United States Army in World War I. The tank battalions were led by a young Lt. Colonel, George S. Patton Jr. The attack caught the Germans in the process of retreating. There were 7,000 U.S. and at least 17,500 German casualties.

Lt. Baker emerged safe and remained in the trenches until October 10, 1918. During a short break from the front, Lt. Baker wrote letters home. He described his unit as "shock troops," meaning that "we get more fighting and a better chance of getting killed than the others." He was homesick—he told his mother in another letter, "I believe Houston is about as near Paradise as I ever want to be again."[8] [9]

[8] Kirkland, *Captain James A. Baker of Houston,* at 260-61.
[9] Two letters written by Lt. Baker from the Western Front to his family in Houston are included at the back of this article.



St. Mihiel Offensive

Lt. Baker was a natural leader – his commander described Baker as aggressive during his nightly patrols and as one who regularly returned with German captives. One of Baker's exploits was later recounted in the official history of the 90th Division during the War:

> "One morning, about 3 a.m., after an unsuccessful patrol had returned to our line, Colonel Sterling directed that another patrol be sent out. Lieutenant Baker was given this

> patrol and returned before daylight with prisoners."[10]

Lt. Baker's reward for heroism without injury was more fighting. After a short break, Lt. Baker's unit moved to the Front near Verdun, France on October 22, where the 90th Division participated in the Meuse-Argonne Offensive.

The Meuse-Argonne Offensive was the largest battle in U.S. military history, involving 1.2 million American soldiers. It was also the deadliest battle – more Americans were killed during this offensive (26,277) than in the Battle of the Bulge (19,276), the Invasion of Normandy (16,293), or any other battle in the Civil War or the World Wars.



Meuse-Argonne Offensive

Baker fought nonstop, from October 22, 1918 until Armistice Day. In a letter to his father, Baker described the carnage he

[10] Wythe, "A History of the 90th Division," approved by Division and Brigade Commanders and published by The 90th Division Association (1920).

witnessed – his captain was seriously wounded, two lieutenants had been killed, and two had been gassed.[11] He was the only officer who so far had escaped unharmed. Because of the casualties, Baker led the depleted unit during the final weeks of the war. Baker saw sights that he would never forget: two German soldiers cowering in a command post; a friend killed on Armistice Day while cleaning his rifle; the appalling conditions in the trenches.[12] Altogether, between August and November 1918, Baker fought for 75 days in active trench warfare.[13]

After the war ended, Lt. Baker received a commendation for bravery and was promoted to Captain. He was assigned to the Army of Occupation in Wehlen Germany, as an aide to Major General Ulysses Grant McAlexander, the "Rock of the Marne."[14]

But the "real Captain Baker" (as Secretary James A. Baker III proudly describes his father) was ready to come home. Captain James A. Baker, Jr. arrived in New York on April 4, 1919, where he embraced Bonner and his family.

Jim was given little time off after the war. He had a family to support and a career to begin. He started practicing law with the firm in 1919, and remained a partner, overseeing the firm's banking work, for more than 50 years. He was known as one of the kindest and most gracious Baker Botts partners.

He and Bonner were never apart again after the war. They enjoyed a long, happy marriage lasting 56 years, until his

[11] Kirkland, at 261.
[12] *Id.*
[13] *Id.*
[14] *Id.*

passing in 1973. She lived an even longer life, passing in 1991 at the age of 96.

The character, kindness and heroism of Captain James A Baker, Jr. had a profound effect on his son:

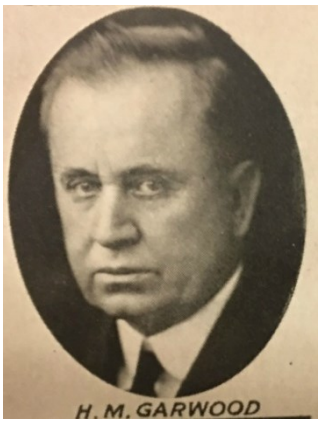
> My father was profoundly proud of his service to his country during World War I. And he kept a warm spot in his heart for his old comrades-in-arms. His example instilled in me a profound respect for our military and a high regard for those who serve in it -- a respect and regard that have stayed with me my whole life.[15]

Calvin Baxter Garwood (1894 - 1960)



Between 1910 and 1919, Mexico and the United States engaged in numerous military skirmishes arising out of the Mexican Revolution, due largely to the actions of Francisco "Pancho" Villa. The height of the conflict came in 1916, when Villa's men stopped a train in Chihuahua, Mexico and killed 18 Americans who worked for the American company (and, later, firm client) ASARCO. He then repeatedly invaded the United States, attacking border towns in Texas and New Mexico. The Texas National Guard was called upon to help address this situation.

[15] Baker Remarks.



In 1916, a young man named Calvin Garwood[16] enlisted for service in the Second Infantry Regiment of the Texas National Guard for service on the Texas border. He was a son of Hiram Morgan Garwood, one of the senior partners who helped lead the firm during this era. There wasn't much action, however, for the Guard, and by the end of the year, the U.S.-Mexican Border had quieted down.

The Great War changed his fate. In July 1917, the United States Army organized the 36th Infantry Division[17] at Camp Bowie in Fort Worth out of National Guard Units recruited from the States of Texas and Oklahoma. The National Guard system provided that in the event of a national emergency, these National Guard units would be absorbed into the Army. The 36th Infantry Division had no artillery (due to a shortage of horses) and two infantry brigades, the 71st Brigade and the 72nd Brigade. The 71st Brigade in turn had two small infantry regiments, the 141st and the 142nd. Calvin Garwood was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the 141st Infantry Regiment.

Camp Bowie was beset by problems, including slow construction, infectious diseases, poor equipment, and a bloated leadership structure. As a result, Calvin Garwood and the rest of the 36th Infantry Division were not deployed to France until July 1918.

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[16] For background on the life of Calvin Garwood, *See* Judge Mark Davidson, "Houston Lawyers Who Made a Difference: Calvin Garwood," published in "Houston Lawyer Magazine", July/August 2017 edition, at page 36.
[17] Much of this history of the 36th Division and the battle of Blanc Mont Ridge is based on a fine book by Romain Cansiere and Ed Gilbert, *Blanc Mont Ridge 1918* (2018).

In France, the 36th Infantry Division was re-equipped with automatic rifles and machine guns. But it was only at 80 percent of nominal strength, with 15,590 enlisted men and 656 officers. And it never had an opportunity to gradually gain experience in combat like other divisions. Rather, Allied leaders considered it "fresh" manpower, and almost immediately threw the 36th Division into action at Blanc Mont Ridge.[18]

Blanc Mont Ridge is located in the Champagne province of France, and was home to some of the most complex German defenses on the Western Front. Its height, with flat, clear, gently sloping plains approaching it from the west, provided good views for German artillery and made any attempt at assault nearly suicidal. And that is where Calvin Garwood would find himself in October 1918.

On October 8th,[19] the 36th Infantry Division participated in an assault on the Ridge. The Division came under immense machine gun and artillery fire from the Germans. One captain of the 141st regiment described how "the German machine-gunners would continue firing until the last moment, and then throw up their hands and shouted "Kamerad!" The Germans would often fire at knee level, and then rake the wounded with more fire.[20]

All of the battalion commanders were killed or wounded. Many of the companies were led by NCOs. The battle broke down into a series of smaller actions "fought by groups of men from

[18] *Id.*, 17-18
[19] The October 8th assault is well described in Cansiere and Gilbert, at 73.
[20] *Id*. at 74.

multiple units under the direction of whoever felt like taking charge."[21] One of those leaders was Calvin Garwood.



Blanc Mont Ridge

The fighting for Garwood and the 71st Brigade lasted for several more weeks, but October 8th was the worst day. With limited tank support, the former Guardsmen were able to overcome German positions, and took large numbers of German prisoners. But the carnage was immense. By the end of October 8th, the losses in Garwood's 71st Brigade tallied 298 killed, 731 wounded, 119 gassed, 74 missing in action, and an undetermined number evacuated because of "shell shock" and combat fatigue. Of the six battalion commanders, two were killed, one was wounded, and one was evacuated due to shell shock.[22]

The battle of Mont Blanc Ridge had some of the hardest fighting in World War I, but today is largely forgotten. The capture of the Ridge within the bend of the Aisne River had immense strategic value, threatening German positions to the east. French Marshall Petain later commented that "[t]he taking of Blanc

[21] *Id*.
[22] *Id*. at 75

Mont is the single greatest achievement of the year 1918 campaign – the Battle of Liberation."[23]

Calvin Garwood was mostly unhurt. However, for the rest of his life, doctors would find mustard gas residue in his body.[24] For his heroism, France awarded him the French Croix de Guerre with Gilt Star.



Croix de Guerre

The 36th Division was shipped home in May 1918. He attended the University of Texas Law School, where he obtained an L.L.B. in 1920. He joined Baker Botts shortly thereafter, and practiced law with the firm for more than a decade.


HONORABLE W. ST. JOHN GARWOOD, SR.

His brother, Wilmer St. John Garwood, also served in the Texas National Guard during the war, and practiced at the firm for a couple of shorter stints during the 1920s. Like their father, both Garwood sons were committed to public service, and led exemplary lives during and after

[23] *Id.* at 90.
[24] Based on conversation and interviews between Judge Mark Davidson, who wrote of Garwood's heroism, and Garwood's family members .

their time at the Firm.

Calvin Garwood formed his own firm in 1931, and was President of the Houston Bar in 1935. He remained a member of the Texas National Guard for most of his life, and served in many other engagements, from the martial law episodes in the East Texas oilfields to service during the World War II, where he was again decorated for his service. [25]

St. John Garwood also served in World War II, and then afterwards became an Associate Justice of the Texas Supreme Court. When he died in 1958, Chief Justice Joe Greenhill, later a Baker Botts lawyer in the Austin Office, served as St. John Garwood's pallbearer. [26]

Many years later, William Lockhart Garwood, St. John's son, was appointed to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals by President Ronald Reagan. William Garwood had a loyal friend who supported his appointment—Secretary James A. Baker III. Judge William Garwood served on the Fifth Circuit until shortly before his passing in 2011.

Edwin B. Parker (1868-1929)



Edwin Parker[27] was a named partner, a visionary, and a primary architect for the initial organization and structure of Baker Botts. He was also the firm's first managing partner (in 1917).

When the United States entered World War I, Robert S. Lovett asked Parker to help organize the

[25] See the *Handbook of Texas History* for an account of the life of Calvin Garwood.
[26] See the *Handbook of Texas History* for an account of the life of St. John Garwood.
[27] This account relies on J. H. Freeman, *The People of Baker Botts* (1992) and the Handbook of Texas History.

War Industries Board and later the Priorities Commission. These were incredibly important positions, for there was no Department of Defense back then, and these agencies were responsible for equipping four million men and transporting them overseas at the rate of 225,000 men per month.[28]

When the war was over, Parker served as Chairman of the United States Liquidation Commission, which was responsible for liquidating more than $3 billion of U.S. military equipment left in Europe after the war. He then served as umpire for the Mixed Claims Commission for the United States and Germany in 1923, which was responsible for resolving claims between these two countries as a result of the war, including those arising out of the sinking of the Lusitania. Later still, he was Commissioner of the Tripartite Claims Commission for the United States, Austria and Hungary in 1926.

For his public service during the Great War, Parker received the United States Distinguished Service Medal and the Order of Polonia Restituta, grade of Commander with the Star, from the newly freed nation of Poland. He was also named Officer of the Legion of Honor (France) and Commander of the Order of the Crown (Belgium).[29]

Parker's legacy continues today. He was one of the pioneers of international arbitration. Today, Columbia Law School houses "The Parker School of Foreign and Comparative Law," and offers the "Parker Fellowship at the International Court of Justice," reflecting the lasting contributions of Edwin Parker to international law.

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[28] Freeman, at 51.
[29] See entry on Edwin B. Parker in the Handbook of Texas History.

Palmer Hutcheson (1887-1966)



Palmer Hutcheson[30] was the son of one of the most prominent families of early Houston. His father was Joseph Chappell Hutcheson (1842-1924), a Civil War veteran, a chairman of the Democratic Party, and a lawyer who began practicing law in Houston in 1874 and had his own firm, Hutcheson & Hutcheson. Palmer's half-brother, Joseph Chappel Hutcheson, Jr. (1879-1973) was Mayor of Houston from 1917-1918, and later Chief Justice of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Palmer was named for his mother's father, Judge Edward Palmer, who was the presiding judge in Harris County from 1860-1862, and succeeded on the bench by Judge James A. Baker.



Palmer studied at the Hill School, Princeton, and the University of Texas Law School. He married Eleanor Thomson Lee on June 8, 1912, and practiced law for several years at Hutcheson & Hutcheson. They had three children, two of whom were born before the Great War.

The United States passed the Selective Service Act of 1917, effective May 18, 1917, to increase the size of the relatively small U.S. Army. Married registrants with dependent children were exempted. When the United States entered the Great War in 1916, Palmer disregarded his age and conscription status, and volunteered for the American Expeditionary Force. He took his

[30] This account relies on a private family history of the Hutcheson family written by Bettie Palmer Hutcheson Carrell and provided by David Oelman, as well as J. H Freeman's *The People of Baker Botts*. The Handbook of Texas History also provides valuable information on the Hutcheson family.

training at Camp Logan, now Memorial Park, in Houston. He was then sent to Officer Training School at Leon Springs, near San Antonio.

Shortly after his arrival in France in 1917/18, he was attached to the AEF installation at Saumur, France as a Lieutenant. The primary function of the training at Saumur was to teach soldiers and officers how to handle artillery. He thereafter saw heavy action in the St. Mihiel Offensive and the Argonne Forest. He was twice decorated for service in combat.

In 1919, after the War, he returned to Houston. By then, his brother had resigned as Mayor of Houston to accept a position as Judge of the District Court for the Southern District of Texas. Instead of returning to his father's firm, Palmer decided to join Baker Botts, becoming a partner in 1921.

Palmer remained with the firm until 1945, when he left to practice law with his sons. His nephew, Joseph Chappell Hutcheson III, a World War II veteran, joined the firm shortly afterwards. Later, Palmer's grandson, Thad T. Hutcheson, Jr., was also a partner at Baker Botts. (In 1988, he was the partner advisor to a young summer associate named Bill Kroger).

Today, many other Hutcheson descendants have practiced law in the City of Houston. One of Palmer's great-grandsons, David Oelman, is a partner at Vinson & Elkins. In his office, Oelman still sits behind the original desk which Palmer used while at Baker Botts in the first half of the 20th Century.

Homer Bruce (1892-1979)



Homer Bruce was quirky, but brilliant – a Rhodes scholar with multiple degrees from the University of Texas and Oxford.

In 1917, he joined the United States Expeditionary Force, and like Palmer Hutcheson, became an artillery captain in France. There, he drafted an artillery manual that became a basic training guide for the U. S. Army.

According to J.H. Freeman, one of Bruce's projects was guiding the trajectory triangulation work of the U.S. Forces in locating the German "Big Bertha" gun firing on Paris in 1918.[31]

The shelling of Paris by the Germans took place between March and August, 1918. The shells weighed 234 pounds, and could be fired at a distance of 81 miles, at a speed of 3,681 miles per hour. The first shell landed in Paris on March 21, 1918, with the explosion being heard around the city. Firing continued in 15-minute intervals, with 21 explosions counted on the first day. Over the course of months, between 320 to 367 shells were fired, killing 250 people, wounding 620, and causing considerable fear and damage.

After the war, Homer Bruce completed his studies at Harvard Law School in 1920, and thereafter joined the firm. He became a partner in 1929 and practiced at the firm for more than 50 years.

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[31] J. H. Freeman, at 99.

Ralph B. Feagin (1891-1946)



Ralph Feagin[32] began work for Baker Botts in 1914, after graduating from the University of Texas Law School. He remained with the firm until 1917, when he was given leave to serve as secretary of the Red Cross Committee in New York, which was chaired by former Baker Botts partner Robert S. Lovett. When Lovett moved to Washington D.C. to become commissioner for priority shipments, he took Feagin with him as his secretary. Feagin later became Executive Secretary of the Priorities Committee of the War Industries Board, with Robert Lovett and then Edwin Parker serving as chairman.

In May 1918, Feagin was commissioned a First Lieutenant and joined the American Headquarters in France. He was later commissioned Captain of the General Staff of the American Expeditionary Force. He served in this function until April 1919, at which time he was discharged from the army in France so that he could assist Edwin Parker with the work of the United States Liquidation Commission.

In July 1919, Feagin returned to Baker Botts. He served as Managing Partner from 1933 to 1946, a period covering both the Great Depression and World War II. He is remembered today for his public service and leadership abilities.

[32] See Freeman, 82-83, for an account of the life of Ralph B. Feagin.

John Charles Townes, Jr. (1886-1948)



John Charles Townes, Jr. was the son of John Townes (1852-1923),[33] one of the first deans of the University of Texas Law School. He attended the University of Texas, where he obtained an L.L.B degree in 1909 and went to work for Baker Botts. After working for the firm for eight years, he left to enlist in the United States Army, and served with the rank of major in the infantry. He was subsequently sent to Texas as a supervisor of the Selective Service. In 1918, he was called to Washington D.C. to rewrite the draft laws.

After the war, Townes did not return to Baker Botts. He served as a lawyer, and ultimately as general attorney, for Humble Oil and Refining, a major client of the firm, until 1929. He later served as President of the State Bar of Texas.[34] Today, he is remembered as the grandfather and namesake of the famed Texas singer/songwriter, John Townes Van Zandt.

Clarence Wharton (1873 - 1941)



Clarence Wharton was one of the older partners of the firm when the War broke out, joining Baker Botts in 1902.

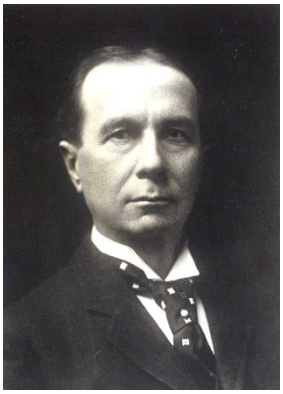
Despite his age, Wharton worked countless hours in support of the troops. No one in the City of Houston raised more money for the soldiers and the war effort than Wharton. He raised the first

[33] See "Townes, John Charles," Handbook of Texas History, published by the Texas State Historical Association.
[34] See "Townes, John Charles, Jr," Handbook of Texas History, published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Y.M.C.A. war fund of $100,000 in the autumn of 1917, and then raised the second Red Cross war fund of $475,000 in 1918.[35] His service during the Great War focused on the Red Cross in Houston. He also served as chairman of the Social Service Commission, which took charge of social activities between the soldiers at Camp Logan and the people of the City of Houston.

He practiced at the firm until 1941. He made a winning argument in the Texas Supreme Court on behalf of firm client Marathon Oil, and died shortly afterwards from cancer.

Robert S. Lovett (1860-1932) and Robert A. Lovett (1895-1986)



Robert Scott Lovett was one of the finest lawyers to work at Baker Botts. He was already an experienced railroad lawyer when he was hired by Captain Baker and joined the firm as a partner in 1892. The name of the firm became "Baker, Botts, Baker and Lovett," and that year Lovett became general counsel for the Southern Pacific Lines in Texas.[36]

He was a partner and second only to Captain Baker at the firm until 1904, when E. H. Harriman, then Chairman of the Board of the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific Railroads, asked Lovett to become General Counsel for both lines. When Harriman died, Lovett became his successor, thereby becoming the most powerful railroad executive in the United States. The Southern

[35] Baines, "Houston's Part in the World War," (1918).
[36] *See* Freeman, 44-46.

Pacific and Union Pacific Railroad were the most important clients of the Firm during the Great War.

During the war years of 1917-18, Lovett was chairman for the American Red Cross Priorities Commission, member of the War Industries Board, member of the Allied Buying Commission, and director of Capital Expenditures on American Railroads. Baker Botts lawyers were involved in these activities, as already discussed, due largely to the force and influence of Lovett.

Robert S. Lovett married Lavinia Abercrombie of Huntsville, Texas in 1890, and they had one son, Robert A. Lovett. Robert A. Lovett was born while his father worked at Baker Botts. He attended Yale, where he was Phi Beta Kappa, brilliant and popular. But he was bored with his studies; his great love was aviation.

While at Yale during the Great War years, he was a member of the First Yale Unit, considered to be the first naval air reserve unit for the United States. He passed his flying test on July 28, 1917, and two weeks later (August 15, 1917), he and his Unit boarded ship, becoming the first Yale Unit members to head overseas for war.

There, after additional training, Lovett was chosen to be among the first American officers to serve with the British, flying escorts for convoys and "spider patrols" searching for German U-boats. He was promoted repeatedly. At one point, he was in charge of all naval aviation operations in Europe. Later, Lovett signed on as a gunner on one of the first bomber units in the War, searching for German U-boats to destroy. As the leader of this unit, called the Northern Bombing Group (or "NGB"),

Lovett and his crews conducted bombing runs for six weeks, operating as America's first strategic bombing force.





After the war, he returned to New York, but decided not to complete his studies. He later became a partner at Brown Brothers, which merged with Harriman to become one of the world's largest investment banks, Brown Brothers Harriman & Co. He also succeeded his father as chairman of the Union Pacific Railroad. During World War II, he served as Assistant Secretary of War for Air. Later, he served as undersecretary to General George C. Marshall, and later, as Secretary of Defense during the Korean War.[37] He was one of the "Wise Men," along

[37]See "The Millionaires Unit," a documentary on the First Yale Unit. The information on Lovett's heroics comes from that film.

with Dean Acheson, George Kennan, and others who helped craft foreign policy after World War II.[38]

The relationship between the Firm and the Lovett family continued through the 20th Century. The Union Pacific Railroad and Brown Brothers Harriman remained important clients of the Firm for most of the 20th Century. There were also two other connections that would prove significant over time.

One of Lovett's partners at Brown Brothers Harriman was Senator Prescott Bush, who in the early 1950s introduced his son, George H. W. Bush, to the firm. The young Bush became an important client of the firm in the 1950s, but that is another story.

Another introduction took place about the same time, involving a young Marine officer. Secretary Baker remembered that meeting well more than 65 years later: "When I was a Marine Corps 2nd Lt. in Quantico in 1952, Robert A. Lovett was Secretary of Defense. Because of his father's past association with my family, I called his office and asked if I could come by and see him. He kindly consented and I will never forget walking into the office of the Secretary of Defense in the Pentagon as a brand new 2nd Lt."[39]

[38] Walter Isaacson and Evan Thomas, "The Wise Men," (Simon & Shuster 1986).
[39] Email from Secretary Baker to the author, November 5, 2018.

Captain James A. Baker (1857-1941)



Captain James A. Baker,[40] was 60 years old when America declared war on Germany in 1916. He was obviously too old for active service. But, he nevertheless contributed to the War effort in many ways.

In 1917, using the financial resources of Rice Institute and the legal skills of Baker Botts, he helped secure the Army training camp in Houston Texas that became Camp Logan.[41] Baker Botts prepared the lease between the Chamber of Commerce and his school, Rice Institute, for creation of the camp.

Baker also arranged, through his various connections, for a $5,000 donation from South Texas Commercial National Bank, the bank that he led, to the Red Cross fund.[42]

He also helped quiet a Rice student revolt in 1918. The Rice campus had become an ROTC training campus, and virtually all male students enlisted. The students protested the ridiculous order of a martinet military officer sent to Rice to oversee military training.[43] Baker fixed that situation.

And amongst all his other activities, he continued to lead Baker Botts ever upward, so that by the time the War ended, the firm was stronger than ever.

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[40] See Kirkland, at 250-56.
[41] Kirkland, "Captain James A. Baker," at 248.
[42] *Id*.
[43] *Id*. at 251 and email from Charles Szalkowski to Bill Kroger, Nov. 4, 2018.

And yet, he must have worried over the safety and wellbeing of his son, Jim. He had already lost another son to illness, and now his second one was in harm's way.



On the eve of his son's departure for the Western Front, on June 16, 1918, Captain Baker sent his son a note from Western Union. The note is reproduced below, and is kept in the archives of Rice University. He wrote:

Lieutenant James A. Baker Jr.,

Form 1201

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Telegram	
Day Letter	Blue
Night Message	Nite
Night Letter	N L

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a telegram. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

WESTERN UNION

TELEGRAM

NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT GEORGE W. E. ATKINS, FIRST VICE-PRESIDENT

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Telegram	
Day Letter	Blue
Night Message	Nite
Night Letter	N L

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a telegram. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

RECEIVED AT
47HOBDE 121NL

FY HOUSTON TEX JUN16 1918

LIEUT JAMES A BAKER JR

CR MRS JAMES A BAKER GARDENCITY HOTEL GA[illegible] TY

THANKS FOR TELEGRAM ON THE EVE OF YOUR DEPARTURE TO GIVE YOUR PRECIOUS LIFE IF NEED BE FOR YOUR HOME YOUR LOVED ON[illegible] AN[illegible]R COUNTRY I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT I HAPPILY APPROVE YOUR CO[illegible]RSE AN[illegible] WOULD GLADLY TAKE YOUR PLACE IF I COULD STOP YOU COULD NOT GO FORTH TO BATTLE FOR A NOBLE CAUSE STOP YOUR LIFE HAS BEEN A CONSTANT JOY TO YOUR MOTHER AND ME STOP I KNOW YOU WILL BE BRAVE AND CONSCIENSIOUSLY DISCHARGE EVERY DUTY STOP MAY GOD IN HIS MERCY WATCH OVER YOU AND KEEP YOU FROM ALL HARM AND BRING YOU BACK IN SAFETY SHALL BE MY CONSTANT PRAYER UNTIL I SEE YOUR DEAR FACE AGAIN ACCEPT A FATHERS BLESSING

JAMES A BAKER 334AM

Captain Baker's prayers were answered. His son came home safely. So too, amazingly, did all of the others heroes who fought for or served their country, and worked at Baker Botts.

Conclusion

When the war ended, our war heroes came home. They reunited with their families, and resumed their legal practices. Many of the returning war veterans helped lead the next generation of Baker Botts lawyers. Parker and later Feagin served as Managing Partners. Bruce and Baker oversaw the tax and banking work by the firm. Hutcheson and Garwood served as Presidents of the Houston Bar Association. Townes served as President of the State Bar of Texas, and general counsel of firm client Humble Oil. Robert A. Lovett helped connect the firm to Brown Brothers Harriman, and later became a national leader during the World War II era. And Captain Baker left behind the twin legacies of a great university, Rice University, and a great law firm, Baker Botts.

The Firm faced many more hardships in the years to come, including the Depression of 1920-21, the Great Depression of 1929-1937, and World War II, along with many more booms, busts, and armed conflicts. The strengths that the Firm enjoys today—not just professionally and financially, but also in our commitments to each other, our communities, our global outlook, and our shared values and beliefs—were shaped by these hardships and struggles first forged from those difficult days of the Great War.

359 Inf.
A.E.F., France,
Oct. 11, 1918.

Dear Mama:-

It has been a month since I have had an opportunity to write, being in the trenches & front lines that length of time. We have just come back to rest billets and just real ink and paper now as well as a few other signs of civilization.

I have enjoyed your letters so much. They have meant more to me than you probably realize. I miss much rather receive letter from home than my pay-check the 1st of the month!

I have not written as much as I have wished but the difficulties of writing over here are stupendous. Then after writing they can only be mailed in certain places. If it had been possible, and I could have followed my inclination, I would have written every day.

It is practically impossible to keep a diary, mother. In the first place it is forbidden & carry any papers of military importance or information to the front lines. This is foreshadowing the possibility that a man may be captured. So I will write every thing possible and let you read the rest upon my return home.

From the present looks of things, the war can not last much longer. At any rate, nothing but absolute impossibility can ever make me believe that I will not be home by Xmas! And I shall pray it, unless Xmas Eve finds me still in France.

Have had a wonderful time today re-reading all your letters. It was the next-best thing to spending that time at home talking to you!

Yesterday I sent Bonner one thousand dollars ($1000.00) by the Y. M. C. A. to 1416 Main St. It should arrive six weeks from yesterday if the latest. Then all peace will be upon its receipt.

I shall be a little anxious until it reaches her.

We have been drilling or in the trenches so constantly since my arrival that it was been practically impossible to spend money, except on French wine and champagne. And I am thoroughly satiated with all varieties of liqueurs. Don't you think I have been economical?!

I have appreciated Dad's letters of introduction very much, but have had absolutely no opportunity to use them. Officers are supposed to have 10 days leave of absence every 4 months. But I'm afraid that we stand very little chance of

getting away for some time. If I ever do this, the first thing I do will be to retrieve those letters of introduction. Col. Scott is a long way from me now. We are at present very near the front, almost within sound of the guns. One day or night march would put us at the front.

I'm reading some of your letters again, Mother. They certainly do cheer me up!

On my return home, I want to jump head first into those preserves you have put up. My mouth is watering now!

Col. C. is with us no longer, nor is a certain Major who hails from our home town. They are both living, too.

Buster's letter was very interesting. The old boy seems to be having a hard time! - or rather was at the time he wrote that letter!

You should see my head! It was shaved clean as the outside of an onion 3 weeks ago. I thought that hair could come out again some time, but the appearance of the tip of my cranium argues ill for the future. When you receive a bald-headed prodigal son? It rather looks at present like you will never get another haircut. If my hair returns by Xmas, it will surprise me!

My recommendation for promotion has been sent in and should be returned in the next couple of weeks.

At present I have plenty of warm clothes, a bath every few days, and a good fire in the room now. The only trouble is that we will move within the next couple of days and it will be nearer home, either.

I saw Bevia twice. We were together two whole days. Am afraid it will be a long time before we meet again.

Can't tell you exactly where I am, but it is very close to what has always been German territory. On one patrol I was within about two miles of German wire - which is about as close as any one has been so far.

Your writing about Bass Rocks makes me mighty home-sick. Do you think we can ever get there together once more? I believe Houston is about as near to Paradise as I ever want to be again!

Wads of love & kisses Bonne for me.

Yours,

Jos. F. Baker Jr.

2nd Lt. Inf. 88th Div.

35-9 Infantry,
A.E.F., France,
Oct. 11, 1918.

Dear Sis:-

You will never know how much I have appreciated your thoughtfulness in writing to me. It has shown me one more an evidence of your sweet character, I had not expected it, (for who knows your own troubles and worries, which engross so much of your time, better than I?) as they were of the more appreciated. Five letters have reached me to date and each has been another ray of sunshine in my somewhat cloudy existence over here. I shall never forget them.

May I confess a little secret to you? Your news of all the people at home was very interesting, but each time you mentioned the baby, a thrill went thru my heart. And when I saw her letter, it faded from sight- for my eyes were filled with tears. I believe I love her as much as you do. If I do not, it is because there is no love which can compare with a Mother's love.

I have been the front lines and been out in No Man's land a number of times. I took two patrols out last week and was so fortunate as to secure four prisoners altogether. They all hollered "Camarade," and we towed them in.

We are at present in rest billets but will probably be at the front again soon. I understand we are "shock troops," which means that we get more fighting and a better chance of getting killed than others.

It's an honor to be so called but a great deal more dangerous.

As we marched in here a day or two ago there was an Allies Balloon a few hundred yards to our left. A German plane suddenly shoved up on the horizon a

the man in the balloon dropped out in a parachute. The Boche shot up the balloon till it burst into flame and then calmly sailed away.

Instead of such sights would much rather see you and your sweet baby. I hope to by Xmas!

Best regards to Murray.

Jim.

P.S. My promotion should be returned soon.

Jos. A. Baker Jr.
2nd Lt. U.S.A.