

Notes on the Children of Joseph Baker and Harriet née Brooker

Albert, 24 February 1863, Maidstone, Kent, England

Ellen Eliza, 15 March 1868, Linton, Kent, England

William George, 10 October 1869, Linton

Louisa Florence, 23 October 1871, Linton

Fanny, 21 July 1873, Linton

Martha, 12 February 1876, Oamaru, Otago, NZ

*Edith, 21 March 1878, Oamaru

*Grandmother of Daphne, Laurence, Glenys and Lynette Hay

Albert Baker

Joseph and Harriet Baker's first child, Albert, was born in East Maidstone, Kent, on 24 February 1863. The young couple had both been living in Maidstone at the time of their marriage.

Albert was almost 12 years old when the 'Gareloch', with his family on board, anchored in Otago Harbour in 1875. He appears not to have attended school in Oamaru, and possibly was apprenticed to a painter, this being the occupation of his adult working life.

Albert married Elizabeth Rusbatch on 19 August 1885. The Rusbatchs with their three young sons (one of whom died on the voyage) had emigrated to New Zealand from the Forest of Dean, Gloucestershire, in 1863. Elizabeth, their fourth child, was born in Christchurch on 11 March 1864 but the family had moved to Oamaru by 1868.

In 1918 at the time of Leonard's death Albert and Elizabeth were living at The Valley, Glenavy, South Canterbury.

Albert and Elizabeth Baker had nine children:

- **Amy**, born 4 November 1886, Oamaru, Otago, New Zealand; death registered in 1893.
- **Harriet**, birth registered in 1888, Oamaru; never married; died 11 April 1957, Oamaru, buried in the Oamaru Cemetery with her parents (Block 117, plots 26 and 27).
- **Ada (Euphemia)**, born 20 January 1890, Oamaru; married James Henry (Harry) Fagan, 1918; death registered in 1955.
- **Albert Ernest**, born 12 February 1892, Oamaru; married Esther Jane Watson in 1917; Albert died in 1970 and Esther in 1982; they are buried together in the Kelvin Grove Cemetery, Palmerston North.
- **May Elizabeth**, born 17 February 1894, Oamaru; never married; died 31 July 1951, buried in the Oamaru Cemetery with her parents, Block 117, plots 26 and 27.
- **Leonard Joseph**, born 7 February 1897, Hawera, Taranaki, New Zealand; killed in action in France, 29 September 1918, as a private in the Canterbury Regiment, Service No.55393; buried in the Fifteen Ravine British Cemetery, Villers-Plouich, Grave VII. A. 3.

- **Herbert Samuel**, born 6 September 1898, Waimate, South Canterbury, New Zealand; married (1) Catherine Purdie Smith, 1924, died 1940 (2) Effie Baker (his cousin), 28 December 1944, Oamaru; Herbert died in 1953 and is buried in the old Waimate Cemetery.
- **Cassie Jane**, born 25 April 1900; married Francis Harold Caldwell in 1924; Francis' death was registered in 1964 and Cassie's in 1977; they are buried together in the Kelvin Grove Cemetery, Palmerston North.
- **George Edward**, born 25 June 1902, Waimate; married Lillian Denholm in 1933; George died in 1952 and Lillian in 1959; they are buried together in the Waimate Lawn Cemetery, South Canterbury..

Elizabeth Baker née Rusbatch died on 18 December 1930 at the age of 66. Albert died of a stroke at 7 Reed Street, Oamaru, on 20 December 1938, aged 75. They are buried together, along with their two unmarried daughters, in the Oamaru Cemetery, Block 117, plots 26 and 27.

Ellen Eliza Baker

Ellen Eliza Baker was born on 15 March 1868 in Linton, Kent, probably in the stone Holmesdale Cottage that the family were living in at the time of the 1871 census. Ellen was a month short of seven years old when the family arrived in New Zealand.

According to the records of the Oamaru South School, Lilly, as she was called, attended the local grammar school on her arrival in the town and continued there for more than three years before being enrolled at Oamaru South in May 1877, aged nine. She was clearly a keen student: in December 1875, her first year at the grammar school, Ellen was awarded a first prize for girls for reading and the same for grammar, and in December 1877, her first year at the primary school, was second equal in her class over all, and gained a special prize for recitation. She left primary school in December 1879 destined for the local high school.

On 29 June 1892, when she was 24, Ellen married Daniel William Young. There were four children of the marriage: Grace born circa 1893, Albert Joseph c.1894, Harriet Allison c.1895 and Christina c.1902. Albert died in 1973, aged 78, and is buried in the Kelvin Grove Cemetery, Palmerston North.

Purewa Cemetery, Auckland, records a William Young, aged 62, dying in 1924 and being buried in Block A, Row 23, Plot 039. Purewa Cemetery also records an Ellen Eliza Young, widow, aged 80, as dying on 7 August 1948 in Auckland where she had been living in the suburb of Morningside. She is buried in the same plot as William.

William George Baker

William George Baker was born on 10 October 1869 in Linton, Kent; he was five years old when the family arrived in New Zealand in February 1875.

According to the records of the Oamaru South School, William first attended the local grammar school before being admitted to Oamaru South in May 1877 where he continued until Dec 1879, going on then to the high school. His formal education ended in May 1883 at the age of 13 when William took up employment, probably as a shop assistant or apprentice to a chemist, his adult occupation.

William Baker was converted and joined the Salvation Army in Dunedin in 1890. Seven months later he was accepted as an officer-cadet and sent to Gore for some

on-the-job training. After some months he was commissioned as a lieutenant and sent to various Salvation Army corps around NZ, including Parnell/New Market in April 1892, then later that year to Nelson, where he was reported to be unwell (the family memory is: TB). Then in April 1893 he was appointed to Hastings, probably his last appointment, as after three years as an officer he resigned due to ill health, and took up employment in Feilding in 1893 or '94. A story passed down through the family is that at some time during his officership William was arrested for preaching in the open air.

The next extant record of William is a *War Cry* report of the marriage of 'Brother Baker to Sister [Sarah Miriam] Packer' in Nelson on 12 November 1899; after the wedding the couple returned to Feilding where William managed or owned a pharmacy. William had been bandmaster of the Feilding Salvation Army band since 1897, and was the corps sergeant-major in the Feilding Corps by June 1911. William and Sarah Baker had four children:

- **Clarence William**, born 1903; married Grace McLelland Clement in 1927.
- **Dulcie Edith**, born 1907; married George Edward (Ted) Wells in 1932.
- **Pearl**.
- **Ivan**; married Myra, six children.

On the family leaving Feilding in 1926 or '27 an informative 'valedictory' was published – possibly in the chemists' trade journal. A cutting of this item, unsourced and undated, is held by Vernon Wells, William's grandson. It reads:

After being a Feilding resident for 33 years, Mr William Baker, of Manchester street, and his family are migrating. Mr Baker is removing to Gonville, Wanganui, to take up a grocery business. Through health reasons, Mr Baker finds his connection with the chemist profession an increasing strain, and although sincerely regretting his impending departure he is confident of making a success of his new line of business.

An enthusiast in ambulance work, Mr Baker has been of valuable assistance to the Feilding Boy Scout movement since its inception, and is always a popular figure at parades. He is a member of the local [retail chemists'?] Association and as a committeemen his work is keenly appreciated. In matters of education, Mr Baker has always taken an interest in the affairs of the Manchester Street School and is a member of its committee. As in other spheres of his activity he took the keenest interest in the welfare of the school. His proudest association is with the Salvation Army, and it is safe to say that he has occupied every position possible of attainment, even bandmaster, also Young People's Sergeant-Major. Mr Baker has always interested himself in the church work of several denominations in Feilding and his services throughout the district have been cheerfully and efficiently performed.

Mr and Mrs Baker have two sons and two daughters. Mr Clarence Baker now resides in Gonville, being manager of a branch firm in the chemist profession. Miss Dulcie Baker, A.T.C.L., attended the Feilding Agricultural High School and later pursued her studies in music. Two small children, Ivan and Pearl, are still at school. The family remove to their new home early next month.

A note handwritten on the cutting, probably by William, says 'new address after Oct 7, 20 Bignell St, Gonville'.

From a letter written, probably in 1930, from Wanganui (31 Liffiton Street) by Sarah to her sister Eva, it would seem that the grocery venture did not work out for William. Sarah says: 'Bill is going to Marton tomorrow morning with Wilsons, on Thursday he is going to Palmerston [North] to try his luck & from there to Feilding. [H]e expects to be away for weeks maybe months, that is if nothing else turns up. I hate the idea of him going away but I suppose it can't be helped, I'm only hoping something else will turn up for him.'

Sarah Miriam Baker née Packer died on 27 November 1933, aged 61 years. William George Baker died on 28 January 1957, aged 87. Sarah and William are buried together in the Aramoho Cemetery, Wanganui, Block B, row 8, plot 470.

Louisa Florence Baker

Louisa Florence Baker was born on 23 October 1871 in Linton, Kent. She was only three years and one month old when the family boarded the 'Gareloch' for New Zealand. However, she never reached these shores, dying of scarlet fever on 21 December 1874 and being buried at sea. According to the ship's surgeon, the scarlet fever was contracted in the emigration depot in Blackwall, London; there were seven cases on board the ship, resulting in two deaths.

Fanny Baker

Fanny Baker was born on 21 July 1873 in Linton, Kent; she was almost 19 months old when the family arrived in New Zealand in February 1875.

According to the (rather confusing) records of the Oamaru South School, Fanny was admitted to the school on 9 July 1877 when she would have been not quite four years old. The record then tersely states that in Dec 1879 Fanny, along with her brother William and sister Lilly, was 'Sent to high school' – at age six years and five months! However, this must be an error, as in February 1881 Fanny was re-admitted to Oamaru South with her previous school being shown as 'Grammar School'. She continued this time at 'South' until September 1887 when we are told that her 'destination', at the age of 14, is the cryptic 'Home at work'.

In 1894, Fanny, 21, gave birth to an illegitimate child who was given the name Frederick. The boy died 16 months later and is buried with his grandparents in Oamaru Cemetery (Block 128, plot 27).

When aged 25, Fanny married Robert Scott on 26 February 1899, and over the next twenty or so years produced six children: Ethel May (3 September 1899), Edith Irene Jane (3 September 1900), Mabel Winifred (8 May 1902), Myrtle, Olive and Owen. All of the children attended either the Oamaru South or Oamaru North School, the last child, Owen, being admitted in April 1915.

Fanny Scott née Baker died on 14 December 1945, aged 72, and is buried in the Hamilton East Cemetery, plot DD-M-17. Robert died on 4 November 1951, aged 73, and is buried in the same cemetery, plot D-L-56.

Martha Baker

Martha was the first of the Baker children to be born in this country – on 12 February 1876 in Oamaru.

She attended Oamaru South School being admitted on 7 February 1881 at the age of five. The history of her formal education is, like that of her older brother and sister, somewhat hard to decipher, however, it seems that not until August 1887 did she pass the third standard – after more than six years of schooling. She is recorded as leaving the school on 25 September 1889 bound for Dunedin; this would have been occasioned by the death of her mother some weeks earlier. However, on 2 December that same year Martha was re-admitted to Oamaru South, leaving school finally on Christmas Day 1890, at nearly 15 years of age, for the more mundane destination of 'Home', where, no doubt, she assisted her elder sister Fanny in looking after her father and those of her siblings still at home.

In about 1905 Martha entered the Salvation Army Training Garrison in Melbourne and after some months was commissioned as an officer. She held appointments in Adelaide, Melbourne and Broken Hill before being transferred back to New Zealand where her appointments were:

- Otepopo (Herbert) 10 May - 21 September 1907;
- Oamaru 21 September - 7 November 1907;
- Leeston 7 November 1907 - 23 January 1908;
- Palmerston 23 January - 30 April 1908;
- On then being appointed to Rakaia Martha resigned her commission.

In 1910 Martha Baker, aged 34, married Arthur Forbes, a widower some six or seven years her junior. Arthur's first wife, Mary Fricker of Georgetown, North Otago, had died in childbirth in 1909 leaving her husband with a baby, Alexander. Martha was employed by Arthur as nurse and housekeeper for a year or so, after which they married. Arthur then fathered three more children: **Arthur** (1912), **Stanley** (1917) and **Harry** (1918).

In 1910 Arthur Forbes took over from Joseph Baker as sexton and caretaker of the Oamaru Cemetery, a job he held for the next 14 years. School records suggest that the family remained in Oamaru until February 1928 at which time Stanley and Harry were enrolled in school at Ardgowan, north of Oamaru; in June 1930 they continued their schooling at Pukeuri, south of the Waitaki River. What employment their father had in these areas is not known.

Martha Forbes née Baker died on 5 July 1934, aged 58. Arthur lived until 1949. Both are buried in the Oamaru cemetery.

Edith Baker

[See Notes on Francis Hay and Edith née Baker.]