

Baker, Blake, Jr. ^[1]

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by Claiborne T. Smith, Jr., 1979

ca. 1755–11 Oct. 1818

Blake Baker, Jr., attorney general, was the son of [Blake Baker](#) ^[2] (d. 1769) and the grandson of Henry Baker of [Chowan County](#) ^[3] (d. 1739). His mother, Mary, was probably a Kinchen: the 1758 will of [William Kinchen](#) ^[4] of [Edgecombe County](#) ^[5] refers to Blake Baker, Sr., as a brother. The elder Blake Baker, an attorney, was a member of the assembly from [Halifax County](#) ^[6] from 1760 until his death in 1769.

Little is known of the early life of the second Blake Baker. He removed his residence to [Warren County](#) ^[7]. He is said to have been a lawyer of ability and experience, and he succeeded [Judge Haywood](#) ^[8] as attorney general of North Carolina in 1794, serving until 1803. In this capacity he drew up the indictment for the state in the 1800 trial against [James Glasgow](#) ^[9], secretary of state of North Carolina, who was found guilty of fraud in his handling of lands belonging to the State of Tennessee. Governor [David Lowry Swain](#) ^[10], in an account of the Glasgow trial in his "Tucker Hall" address, gave the impression that Attorney General Baker was not effective in the prosecution of the case and that the state relied more on [Edward Jones](#) ^[11], the solicitor general. [Bishop Cheshire](#) ^[12], in his chapter on the Glasgow trial in *Nonnulla*, supported Baker and questioned Swain on this point.

In 1807, Baker represented Warren County in the House of Commons. In 1808 he was appointed a judge of the superior court in the eastern district for a year. Again appointed superior court judge in 1818, he died the following October while holding court in [Moore County](#) ^[13]. A relative, Dr. Simmons Baker, said of him, "He was bred for the law and by dint of hard labor, for he was not brilliant, he came to be considered very safe counsel."

Blake Baker married first Ann Clark of Tarboro; she died without issue. He married secondly a cousin, Ann Bullock Allen, by whom he had an only son, Blake. In the nineteenth century, "Blake Baker" was used as a given name by many families in Eastern North Carolina.

References:

Simmons Jones Baker Papers (Southern Historical Collection, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill).

Simmons Jones Baker, "Recollections of the Baker Family" (MS, 1847).

Joseph B. Cheshire, *Nonnulla* (1930).

John H. Wheeler, *Historical Sketches of North Carolina* (1851).

Additional Resources:

Blake Baker indexed in the Colonial and State Records of NC in Documenting the American South, UNC Chapel Hill Libraries: https://docsouth.unc.edu/csr/index.html/indices/B#B_i_002449 ^[14]

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[Dictionary of North Carolina Biography, University of North Carolina Press](#).^[19]

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