

1906 Legacy Descendant Bio - Ralph Baker



Ralph Baker is the great-nephew of Jesse Max Barber, Editor-in-Chief of *The Voice of The Negro*.

Jesse Max Barber was born July 5, 1887, in Blackstock, South Carolina. Barber moved to Atlanta in 1903 after completing Benedict College to be the editor-in-chief of an Atlanta based periodical, *The Voice of The Negro*, founded in 1904. At its peak in 1906, it had a national

circulation of 15,000. During the height of Barber's journalism career, the worst racial outbreak in the history of Georgia, the 1906 Atlanta Race Massacre, forced Barber and his periodical out of town.

An anonymous letter by Barber published in the *New York World* sealed his fate in Atlanta. Barber's letter charged local newspapers the *Atlanta Georgian* and the *Atlanta Constitution* with fabricating reports of Black men assaulting white women, which ignited the Massacre of 1906. Barber's identity was discovered, and he was told to leave town by a police officer. History professor David Fort Godshalk writes in his book ["Veiled Visions..."](#) about the Massacre's impact on U.S. race relations - "When Jesse Max Barber wrote a newspaper article pointing to white civic leaders' complicity in the riot's outbreak, white elites threatened to lynch the Black journalist before they forced him from the city."

Jesse Max Barber moved to Chicago to restart his career with a new publication, *The Voice*, until 1907 when the magazine ceased publication. Barber also worked as the *Chicago Conservator* editor before moving to Philadelphia to enroll in dental school in 1909. After Barber completed school, he married Miss Hattie Taylor, a school teacher in Philadelphia.



Jesse Max Barber

Jesse Max Barber was also a founding member of The Niagara Movement and The John Brown Society. As an active civil rights leader, Barber served his community from 1919-1921 as president and on the executive committee of the NAACP's Philadelphia branch. The John Brown Memorial Association president continued writing articles on civil rights and racial injustice in *Abbott's Monthly*, between 1930 and 1933.

Upon Barber's death on September 20, 1949, his niece, Beatrice Miller-Baker, kept his memory alive through her son, Ralph Baker.

Ralph Baker is a father and grandfather, now retired from the pharmaceutical industry, is an avid traveler. Baker looks forward to continuing his uncle's legacy through his international work with his fraternity, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Incorporated.

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