

# Ballot Box to Jury Box

The Life and Times of an English Crown Court Judge

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## The Life and Times of an English Crown Court Judge

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**John Baker**

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## Acknowledgements

Much of the source material for this book comes from press cuttings collected by my late mother, Dora Rolston. The dates of political activities and legal cases were all recorded and the material itself was of the greatest help to me. I knew nothing about this until shortly before she died.

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Finally, as I have looked back, I have realised that there are many people with whom I have lost contact and I have wondered what has happened to them. If any of these would like to get in touch with me, would they please do so through the National Liberal Club, Whitehall Place, London SW1 2HE - and I will do my best to reply quickly.

**John Baker**

October 2005

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## CONTENTS

Acknowledgements *iv*

## CHAPTER

1 From Calcutta to Oxford	7
2 Oxford, the Navy and the Liberals	22
3 Starting out in the Law	32
4 Career Changes for the Better	44
5 Hopes, Disappointments and Nigeria Once Again	61
6 Life at the Bar and Another General Election	96
7 Starting on the Bench	149
8 A Sporting Chance	180
Index of Names	206

## About the author

**His Honour John Baker** was born in Calcutta and educated at Plymouth College, Wellington School, Somerset and Wadham College, University of Oxford where he was Treasurer of the Oxford Union in 1948.

He was admitted as a solicitor in 1951 and became a partner with Amery Parkes and Co where he worked on the pioneering scheme to provide legal advice to members of the Automobile Association. He then became a partner in Goodman Derrick and Co specialising in libel, copyright and franchising of the early independent television stations, before switching to the Bar in 1960 – where he joined the chambers of the Sir Dingle Foot QC, MP. He became a Crown Court Recorder in 1972 and a circuit judge in 1973, being appointed resident judge at Kingston-upon-Thames Crown Court (1982-1998), Liaison Judge for Magistrates and the Probation Service and chair of the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee on the appointment of Justices of the Peace for South West London. He also sat as a Deputy High Court Judge.

Beyond these roles, John Baker was a regular broadcaster on radio and television including on legal matters and televised debates. An active member of the Liberal party from his student days, he stood three times for Parliament in the General Elections of 1959, 1964 and 1970 and was chair of the Liberal Party Committees on Co-partnership in Industry and Broadcasting as well as a Trustee of the National Liberal Club for three years from 2000.

Having now left both the ballot box and jury box behind, John Baker lives in Richmond, south-west London with his wife Joy.