



# **Jim Baker: Famous Mountain Man, Scout, Hunter, Guide, and Fighter**

*Glenn D. Bradley*

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*Glenn D. Bradley*

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Glenn D. Bradley (1884-1930) was the author of such books as *The Story Of the Pony Express*, *The Story Of the Santa Fe*, and *Winning the Southwest*.

Jim Baker (1818–1898), trapper, scout and guide, was a friend of Jim Bridger and Kit Carson and one of General John C. Fremont's favorite scouts. He was one of the most colorful figures of the old west.

Born in Belleville, Illinois, at 21 he was recruited by Jim Bridger as a trapper for the American Fur Company and on May 22, 1839 left St. Louis with a large party heading for the annual rendezvous in the mountains. In August 1841 he was involved in a desperate fight at the junction of Battle Creek and the Snake River when 35 trappers beat off a large band of Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapaho.

The decline of the fur trade in the early 1840s drove many the trappers to quit, but Baker stayed on. Little is known of his movements after 1844, but in 1855 he was hired as chief scout for General William S. Harney of Fort Laramie, and he was part of the Federal Army sent against the Mormons. In 1873 he built a cabin with a guard tower near the Colorado Placers of the Little Snake River in Wyoming where he raised livestock until his death in 1898. His cabin is currently on display at the Little Snake River Museum in Savery, Wyoming. His grave marked with a stone near Savery, Wyoming.

Baker was married twenty times, each time to an Indian woman, one of whom was the daughter of a Cherokee chief; he had a number of children. Another of Baker's wives was a daughter of Shoshone Chief Washakie.

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