Florence Baker Encyclopedia Article

Florence Baker

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Florence Baker

1841-1916

Transylvania-born explorer who was the first woman to explore the Nile River. Born Florence von Sass, she had fled the Ottoman Empire in the Balkans to arrive in Turkey in 1860, where Sam Baker, a British explorer of Africa, rescued her from a Turkish slave auction. She accompanied him on his journey to look for the source of the Nile River in Africa. She earned a reputation as an excellent shot, a keen negotiator, and critical member of all of Baker's expeditions throughout Africa in the late nineteenth century. She and Baker eventually married.