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Not Without Peril: 150 Years of Misadventure on the Presidential Range in New Hampshire

Nicholas Howe
Appalachian Mountain Club (May 2000)
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After years of publishing his work in newspapers and magazines around the world, Howe has used his writing talent and vast experience to create a compilation of well-researched and captivating stories about New Hampshire's White Mountains. While over 150 years of exploration and tragedy are chronicled, the development of the trails system is also described; each tragedy having resulted in improvements to make the various trails safer for both novice and experienced hiker alike.

Howe highlights the most fascinating stories through the years. From Frederick Strickland's tragic attempt to hike the range in inadequate clothing in 1849 to Sarah Nicholson's inability to choose which way to turn to avoid a car-sized block of ice hurling down Schiller's Rock toward her in 1994, the stories are riveting. Most of these misadventures resulted in improvements over the course of time, which Howe describes throughout the book: paths were improved and new ones added; cairns, markers and signs marked the routes; shelters were built; a weather station atop Mt. Washington was built to keep track of changing conditions; rescue groups were organized and communications-radio and telephone-were added over time.

Howe has given hikers a magnanimous offering. While sharing the abundant history and describing the scenery and topography of the White Mountains as well as the developments for safer adventure therein, he also points out that only by using good, common-sense can hikers keep themselves safe from nature's destructive forces. This should be required reading for anyone who will be-or already has gone-hiking in the mountains.
NELLY HEITMAN (February 14, 2000)

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