

Not without Peril (President Range Mtns) by Nicholas Howe (2000)

This book is dedicated to those who have died near Mt Washington in the last 150 yrs.

Mt. Washington [MW] is only 6288 ft, but has the **worst weather in the world**. Sudden changes can come abruptly & violently. It has had winds of 231 mph & -60 dF. The only protection against such wind is to turn back below the tree line. Our natural instincts have us walk with the wind to our backs. They can burn a chord of wood in 24 hrs at one of the mtn shelters. Each 100' gain in altitude is equivalent to moving ten miles north. There is a cog railway to the top built in 1869. It can be warm & calm in the valley & violent storm up higher. Easterly winds blowing all day are a warning signal for bad weather on the Presidential Mtns. Madison Springs Hut is a must see. Hot liquid Jell-O is a good remedy for hypothermia.

1849 Fredrick Strickland was the 1st to climb MW in winter, but was caught in a snow storm & died on the descent. 1929 Daniel Rossiter died when an old cog engine lost control on a descent. 1933 Jessie Whitehead was ice climbing & fell 800', but lived. 1933 Simon Joseph died from accumulating errors. He was on a day hike with no food, warm clothes, shelter & a storm came in. 1939 Joe Caggiano died of hypothermia [wind, rain & cold temps]. 1954 Philip Longnecker & Jacques Parysko died in an avalanche.

Joe Dodge worked on the mtn all of his life. Marconi started wireless telegraph in 1896 & Joe used the short-wave radio to help communicate on the mtn. 1930s CCC men built 4' tall cairns every 50' to mark trails above the tree line. Search & rescue has to be careful not to become the victim. 1994 Sarah Nicholson was the 115th person to die on the Presidential Range.

Quotes: "There have been joys too great to be described in words, and there have been griefs upon which I have dared not to dwell, and with these in mind I must say, climb if you will, but remember that courage and strength are naught without prudence, and that a momentary negligence may destroy the happiness of a lifetime. Do nothing in haste, look well to each step, and from the beginning think what may be the end." (Edward Whymper – 1st to ascend Matterhorn & lost 4 in the process)

The virtue of any undertaking is in direct proportion to its difficulty.