



## Not Without Peril, Tenth Anniversary Edition: 150 Years of Misadventure on the Presidential Range of New Hampshire

*By Nicholas S. Howe*

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### **Not Without Peril, Tenth Anniversary Edition: 150 Years of Misadventure on the Presidential Range of New Hampshire** By Nicholas S. Howe

Among the most beautiful and deadly mountains in the world, Mount Washington has challenged adventurers for centuries with its severe weather. From the days when gentlefolk ascended the heights in hoop skirts and wool suits to today's high-tech assaults on wintry summits, this book offers extensive and intimate profiles of people who found trouble on New Hampshire's Presidential Range, from the nineteenth century through the present day. Recognized by the Boston Globe as one of the 100 Essential New England Books, the first edition of *Not Without Peril* garnered acclaim from the Banff Mountain Book Festival for its gripping tales of exploration and tragedy. This tenth anniversary edition includes a new afterword from author Nicholas Howe, who offers a personal account of an evening spent at the Mount Washington Observatory while 160-mile-per-hour winds raged outside.

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## **Editorial Review**

### Amazon.com Review

Like a piece of granite chipped off a Presidential peak, veteran journalist Nicholas Howe's assessment of misadventure in New Hampshire's rugged mountains has a crisp, puritanical feel that fairly rasps New England. Take his description of the near-vertical (and now well-skied) slope that nearly killed Max Engelhart in 1926: "Tuckerman Ravine is a sort of twin to Huntington Ravine, a left-hand punch into the side of Mount Washington by the same primordial giant that made Huntington with his right." Underlying *Not Without Peril* is the not-so-subtle message that the Presidential Range, topping out at just over 6,000 feet, is as uncompromising as any other mountain range. After all, these mountains--named for Washington, Lincoln, Madison--are home to some of the most vicious weather recorded on the planet. Howe makes no judgment about those whose misfortunes he chronicles; there are tender moments that manage to stay faithful to a crusty Yankee sensibility, as in the tale of Lizzie Bourne, who died in a snowstorm while huddled in a makeshift lean-to. Howe quotes her uncle George: "She was dead--had uttered no complaint, expressed no regret or fear, but passed silently away." Such sober tales, scrupulously researched, tell the history of a mountain range and its climbers, some of whom are immortalized for their ill-fated treks. It's a gritty read, a touch morbid, but more than compensated for by sharp writing and compelling drama. --*Tipton Blish*

### From Kirkus Reviews

A catalog of death in the New England mountains. Although not high by world standards, New Hampshire's Mount Washington is home to howling winds and monstrously cold temperatures, often the coldest in the Lower 48. For years, mountaineer and freelance journalist Howe has been haunting the mountain and nearby summits of the Presidential Range, a place where furious storms, hypothermia, and occasional bears take their toll on human visitors at all seasons. Howe catalogs the errors of the unfortunate victims and silly mistakes which seem always to come into play whenever Americans head outside, whether the date is 1849 or 1994. (The most common of them, Howe's evidence suggests, is the simple omission of appropriate cold-weather gear, for although the summertime temperature may approach 90 at Mount Washington's base, the wind chill may take it down to freezing at the peak.) Few of Howe's pointed tales end happily. Some of his protagonists slip easily into death, having made some misjudgment or another; others wander around for days in the woods, running from lightning and wild animals in scenes that would fit right into a sequel to *The Blair Witch Project*, before meeting their unhappy fate; a few others even make it off the mountain alive, but minus toes and fingers. Since there are only so many ways to die on a mountainside you can fall, freeze, or get munched the narrative tends to be repetitious, and a little judicious paring would have been welcome. Still, all these deaths lead up to a well-taken moral: It is not so much that Mount Washington is a killer, but that people approaching it need to take better care than many of them do. Fans of outdoor disaster and unpleasantness, as well as collectors of New England mountain lore, will find Howe a generally satisfying guide to New Hampshire's dark side. -- *Copyright ©2000, Kirkus Associates, LP. All rights reserved.*

### Review

¿Howe tells the stories straightforwardly, deftly blending in the historical and geographical information needed to make them complete. *Not Without Peril* makes a memorable, informative, and ultimately sobering read about the high peaks of the Northeast.¿

¿Sentinel & Enterprise, Leominster, MA

¿Between the excellent prose, the interesting historical details and the riveting accounts of misadventure, *Not Without Peril* will be appreciated by anyone with an interest in outdoor recreation or in the Presidential Mountains of New Hampshire. Reading about these mountains is gripping.¿

¿The Bridgton News, Bridgton, ME

¿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.¿

¿Foreword Magazine

¿Others have been quick to recommend the book.¿The New England Booksellers¿ Association named it a Discovery Honor Book for the month of April [2000], saying, ¿The stories are gripping, the characters compelling, and the relevant historical aspects fascinating.¿¿ ¿The Conway Daily Sun

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Jamie Lundquist:**

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#### **David Shields:**

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