



# **Katahdin: An Historic Journey - Legends, Exploration, and Preservation of Maine's Highest Peak**

*John Neff*

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For millennia, Mount Katahdin has loomed over the changing landscape we now call Maine's North Woods, inspiring and challenging people, from the Native Americans whose trade routes rounded its base; to Henry David Thoreau and Governor Percival P. Baxter, who forged new approaches to nature and conservation; to the hundreds of outdoorspeople who enjoy its trails and waterways each year. Superbly researched and written, this new book by Maine historian John Neff draws together rare sources and takes readers on a journey through the mountain's history, legend, and legacy. The narrative retraces the steps of Native Americans, whose spiritual approach to the mountain still resonates today; recounts colonials' first glimpses of the dramatic mountain; and accompanies Thoreau as he soaks up the landscape's majesty. Neff's analysis of the region's development through the advent of railroading and logging, sporting, and trailbuilding illustrates the history of its pathways, including the Appalachian Trail. The voices of today's Native American, conservation, and community members infuse this historical narrative with the life of the people who are intricately connected with the mountain. Neff, an authority on Baxter State Park, gives the reader a unique perspective on Baxter's legacy of protection and conservation. He also explores the mountain's more sinister legacy--that of misadventure and tragedy in the wilderness. Neff's compelling narrative bridges the mountain's past and today's continuing opportunities for conservation and recreation in Maine's spectacular North Woods--a story that will fascinate historians, outdoor enthusiasts, and armchair adventurers alike.

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