

Mount Washington

Park History

Darby Field, a British colonist from Exeter, made the first recorded ascent of Mt. Washington in 1642. It has been related through the years that Field's two Native American companions did not accompany him to the summit because the Great Spirit was believed to dwell there. The mountain's history has been colorful since that first ascent.

In 1819, Ethan Allen Crawford and his father Abel - early settlers and inn-keepers of the Crawford Notch area, built the first trail to the summit. By the mid-1800s, tourism on the mountain flourished. Train service was extended into the White Mountains, and a bridle path was opened to the summit that made it accessible to tourists who were flocking to the area. The first hotel was built at the summit in 1852 to accommodate the tourists arriving on foot and horseback. It was so successful its first year of operation that a competing hotel, the Tip Top House was built the following year.



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