

Appalachian Trail Hike - Jim Highsaw  
Springer Mt. to Kent, CT March 20 to July 30, 1974  
Kent, CT to Mt. Katahdin June 4 to August 6, 1975

I did about two-thirds of the Trail in 1974 and the remainder in 1975. The following is an account of my 1975 hike, which includes hiking and interacting with a number of hikers doing hikes of various lengths.

On June 3, 1975 I flew from Washington, DC to Albany and took a bus to Kent, CT where I arrived about 6 p.m. Then I walked for 3 miles on a dirt road along the Housatonic River to reach Mt. Brook shelter, where I had ended my 1974 hike.

Mt. Brook Shelter, CT to Congdon Camp Shelter, VT June 4 - 16

I began this section by walking 6 miles along the Housatonic River to Cornwall Bridge. On the way I passed a beautiful stand of pines, which I have read was heavily damaged by a storm some years later. At the Cornwall Bridge store I encountered a group of ladies from the State Prison who were on a hiking/camping trip with their counselors. After they left I bought some Cokes and enjoyed lunch on the porch of the store. I continued on another 6 miles to Mohawk shelter. It was occupied by a picnic group, so I pushed on another 2 miles to Boulder shelter, which was in a deserted picnic area. It was a good day - made 14 miles and didn't feel weighed down too much by my 7-pound LL Bean tent. Highlights of this section included meeting a couple who hiked 2 weeks on the A.T. every year and were planning to finish it, splurging on a nice room at the Salisbury Inn, camping south of Mt. Everett in the rain and staying dry in my new tent, enjoying a water break at the marvelous piped spring at Jug End, having the camping area at Upper Goose Pond to myself, ending a cold, wet, miserable day by getting a motel room in Dalton, Massachusetts, hiking over Mt. Graylock, and taking a rest day at Congdon Camp shelter to visit with Caretaker Gloria Rapalee who I had met in 1974 on her end-to-end hike.

Congdon Camp Shelter, VT to Hanover, NH June 17 - 27

To start this section, I walked 11 miles and found a place to camp by the Trail. The black flies were getting to be a problem, so I was glad to dive into my tent. Highlights of this section included spending some time at Stratton Pond, a pleasant evening at North Bourn shelter, meeting Mike Conway (a student at the U. of Indiana) at Clarendon shelter, photographing a full moon at Pico Camp shelter, enjoying a lunch stop on the porch of a Dartmouth Outing Club cabin,

and taking a rest day in Hanover by staying at a Dartmouth fraternity house.  
Note: Mike Conway and I hiked together for most of the remainder of the trip.

#### Hanover, NH to Gorham, NH June 28 - July 11

I left Hanover and walked 15 miles to Trapper John shelter. Highlights of this section included camping at Wauchipauka Pond, seeing my first Spruce Grouse, crossing Mt. Washington and the Presidentials, the views from above treeline, a slow, wet slippery ascent of Wildcat Ridge north of Pinkham Notch, a very helpful Hut crew at Carter Notch Hut (they prepared dinner for me at 8:30 p.m. and put me in a cabin for the night), and a much-needed break at Mrs. Stinson's Rooming House in Gorham.

#### Gorham, NH to Pierce Pond Shelter, Maine July 12 - 23

I began this section by walking 10 miles to Carlo Col shelter, then the next morning 5 miles to Full Goose shelter to get ready to take on Mahoosuc Notch the next day. The Notch was tougher than I expected, especially with a tall, heavy pack. It took me 4 hours to get through. Other highlights of this section included a pleasant campsite near Orbeton Stream, staying at the Horn Pond shelters in the Bigelow Range, and swimming at the Pierce Pond shelter. The insects were bad at Pierce Pond so we put up a tent inside the shelter.

#### Pierce Pond Shelter, Maine to Mt. Katahdin, Maine July 24 - August 6

I got an early start with 3 other hikers and reached the Kennebec River at 9 a.m. We waded across the river in knee-deep water; it took about 25 minutes. Then Mike Conway and I continued on to Pleasant Pond shelter. Other highlights of this section included staying at Ken's Place in Monson, riding out a hail storm at Little Wilson Stream campground, enjoying a swim at Cooper Brook Falls shelter, enduring a 105 degree day the next day, seeing a Moose, reaching the shelters at Daicy Pond in Baxter State Park, borrowing a canoe from a man renting a cabin and then paddling around the pond, and, of course, hiking up Mt. Katahdin on August 6. We had a nice day for the ascent. At the top, I looked south, thought about all the miles, all the experiences, all the people, and all the hard work, and was kind of amazed that I had done it.

### Approach to Hike

I carried a Kelty BB5 frame pack, an LL Bean 2-man tent, a stove which used butane cartridges, and a 35 mm camera with a 50 mm lens and color slide film. Although the tent weighed 7 pounds, protection from the insects and staying dry was well worth it. I cooked over wood fires whenever possible (about 40 percent of the time). An old ski pole worked well as a walking stick.

### Other Hikers

During the third week I met Mike Conway (a student at the U. of Indiana) and did most of the remaining miles with him. I spent a rest day visiting with Gloria Rapalee, the GMC Caretaker at Congdon Camp shelter in Vermont, who provided good advice and tips from her 1974 hike. I also enjoyed spending a few days in New Hampshire with Ann McLaughlin and her friend Joyce (from eastern Massachusetts), who were hiking north through New England and then planning to hike south to Georgia. In 1976 I received a letter from them to confirm they had completed their hike.