



# Grandma Gatewood's Walk: The Inspiring Story of the Woman Who Saved the Appalachian Trail

*Ben Montgomery*

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Emma Gatewood told her family she was going on a walk and left her small Ohio hometown with a change of clothes and less than two hundred dollars. The next anybody heard from her, this genteel, farm-reared, 67-year-old great-grandmother had walked 800 miles along the 2,050-mile Appalachian Trail. And in September 1955, having survived a rattlesnake strike, two hurricanes, and a run-in with Harlem gangsters, she stood atop Maine's Mt. Katahdin. Driven by a painful marriage to an oppressive husband, Gatewood became the first woman to hike the entire Appalachian Trail alone, as well as the first person man or woman to walk it twice and three times. Gatewood became a hiking celebrity, and appeared on TV and on the pages of "Sports Illustrated." The public attention she brought to the footpath, and her vocal criticism of the lousy, difficult stretches, led to bolstered maintenance, and very likely saved the trail from extinction. The story of Grandma Gatewood will inspire readers of all ages by illustrating the full power of human spirit and determination. Even those who know of Gatewood don't know the full story a story of triumph from pain, rebellion from brutality, hope from suffering."

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