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My Appalachian Trial I: Three Weddings And A Sabbatical

MY APPALACHIAN
— TRIAL I —
**THREE WEDDINGS
AND A SABBATICAL**



STEVE ADAMS



Synopsis

Steve Adams, a retired, overweight, 61-year-old Brit, who had never hiked in his life, decided one day that he wanted an adventure. Not willing to settle for just any old adventure, he decided to hike the entire length of America's Appalachian Trail, a beguiling attraction for many hikers, both home-grown and from all corners of the globe. Stretching from Georgia to Maine, taking its travelers on a whimsical journey through national forests and parks, along ridges and over mountains, the A.T. is the longest hiking-only trail in the world. The Appalachian Trail is physically strenuous and emotionally taxing, involving a commitment of about six months to complete the entire 2,200 miles: only one in four of the people who start in Georgia will actually complete the hike. Steve was completely unprepared for the myriad challenges that the trail offered him, but took them on with gusto. *My Appalachian Trail I: Three Weddings and a Sabbatical* tells Steve's story of the hike from its origins, details his careful preparation and tentative first steps, and follows his faltering progress and eventual growth as a hiker. Often intimate, sometimes profound, and occasionally profane, *My Appalachian Trail I* explains why Steve was drawn to such an iconic trail, how he embraced it, and what happened when things went wrong.

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Customer Reviews

Once, when younger and in better shape physically, hiking the Appalachian Trail was on my bucket list. Alas, my bucket has rusted out, and "My Appalachian Trail I: Three Weddings and a Sabbatical" gave me the ability to hike the trail vicariously through Steve. His writing is vivid and humorous, full of wonderful stories of this marvelous adventure, and of many of the conflicts and things that almost kept him away - and off of the trail once he had started. Anecdotal references take you along on the trail along with a cast of characters (and some of them really are characters) over over 2,000 miles of living in mice infested shelters and tents, hostels with other stinky hikers... let's just say I'm glad Kindle hasn't developed a scratch and sniff version! Steve also goes into how he came to have a desire to hike the A.T., and spends a fair amount of time in a somewhat cathartic period of time giving the reader some insight into his previous professional and personal life, and that of his family. All of that writing seems to have allowed the reader to understand that hiking the Trail has a value that extends beyond the achievement of a goal, but a clearing of the mind, a resolution of feelings and misgivings, and better understanding of what was isn't necessarily what has to be today. Whether you have hiked the Trail, wanted to hike the Trail, or will hike the Trail this is a good read.

Have read about twenty different accounts of people hiking the AT and this is definitely in the top five, his almost painful deprecation of his personality and the examples of why he feels this way are an interesting aside from the usual daily accounts so often found in such reads. He seems truly self aware and honest about himself but it doesn't clutter up his journal - actually adds to it

Steve Adams, aka Mighty Blue, started writing his Appalachian Trail memoirs and soon found it had grown to 250,000 words. Ordinarily, this would be a warning sign of an amateur who simply does not know how to turn off the spigot. But thankfully, that's not the case with "Three Weddings and a Sabbatical" (volume 1) and "Creaking Geezer, Hidden Flagon" (volume 2; hilarious title). Adams not only possesses a clever British wit, but is a truly effective, entertaining, and informative writer. If you want to know what it's like to hike the AT, you won't go wrong reading Mighty Blue's account. I notice that some reviewers have objected to his weaving elements of his past and personal lives into the account of his hike. But honestly, once you've hiked the trail, you begin to understand how it has a way of bringing such introspection to the surface, and it's not at all out of place here, in my opinion.

Those who (mistakenly, in my opinion) think it is somehow not integral to his hike can of course skip these more "domestic" bits, but I appreciated the author's candor. Remember, the two best books, or at least most successful, "about" long-distance hiking, Bryson's "A Walk in the Woods" and Cheryl Strayed's "Wild," are good *because* they are more than just another tedious, slightly glorified hiker journal (of which there are far, far too many). Steve Adams is funny, insightful, and full of honesty about what it takes to hike the Appalachian Trail. If you want a taste of that experience, you can't go wrong with his two-volume memoir.

It is astounding to me that this is Steve Adams' first book. He has an amazing way of telling a story that makes you feel as though you are with him the entire way. This book is an incredible journey not only of determination to complete a lofty goal but of personal reflection upon a life lived so far. As human beings it is often difficult to see our own faults with any sort of objectivity. Steve is at times brutally honest about his life and some of the mistakes he has made along the way. This book is chock full of British humor that often had me laughing to the point of tears. I was honestly expecting a simple narrative of the route that the Appalachian Trail takes, what I received instead was an extremely open and honest account of an amazing adventure, full of a cast of characters not soon to be forgotten with the lead character being the author himself. Have begun the second book this morning and have no doubt that it will continue to entertain just as the first one did. Thanks for sharing the journey so far...

Three stars for me: however, this is likely because I've read too many AT trail narratives. Many of them seem to be alike. This book could be divided into four sections: 1) hiking, 2) social life, 3) off trail towns, etc., 4) personal life. Thus, most of this volume is about collateral experiences, not the actual trek. For example, taking a cab to Pigeon Forge and watching the movie "Noah" then describing it (Steve was in his seat complete with popcorn and drink before it started). The book is moderately interesting, but took me a long time to complete, as I was less than enthralled. Steve Adams acknowledges his complete lack of hiking experience. However, his trepidation of spending nights alone in the woods, after weeks on the trail, is somewhat surprising. Maybe, it is an illustration of how the trail experience has strikingly changed over the years

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