

HATTIE EVANS



Hattie Evans moved to the Mt. Willard Section House in Crawford Notch in 1903 with her husband, Loring, who was the Maine Central Railroad's Section Foreman at the time. After he was killed in a train accident in 1913, Hattie was left with four small children to raise on her own. The family remained in the Section House, where Hattie continued to house and feed the section men who maintained that part of the steep mountain grade.

Though Hattie died in 1954, she lives on through the memories of her grandchildren, now in their 60s and 70s. They grew up on stories of how she put their parents on passing trains which slowed but did not stop in order to take them into Bartlett for school. They heard of how, despite endless chores and unexpected problems, Hattie always helped with homework and found time to spend with her children, creating strong family bonds and teaching old-fashioned values.



The four Evans' children (l-r): Raymond, Enola, Gordon, and Mildred. Enola, the youngest, was tied to the porch when a train was due.

Her grandchildren recall her as being humble and unassuming, but she was known as "Indomitable" in her day, and surely she must have been a very strong woman indeed to persevere on her own in a remote, inhospitable environment with such a young family. Conway Scenic Railroad is proud to honor the memory of this unforgettable woman – and the history that took place in Crawford Notch.



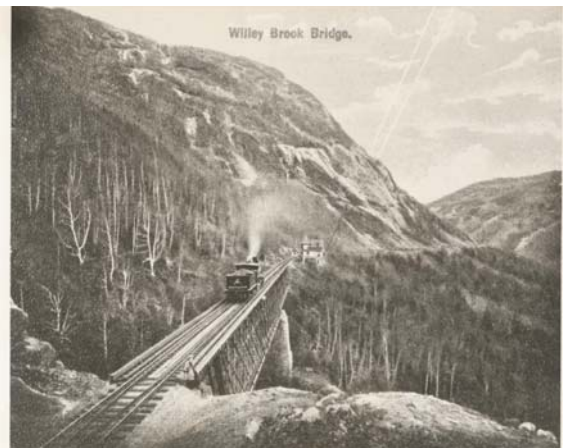
Above: Mt. Willard Section House, in 1916.

Left: Hattie and the four children in front of the section house later that same year.

Below: postcard from 1902, Mt. Willard & Willey Brook Bridge



A fire destroyed the section house in 1972, but Hattie's family still maintains a memorial site on the mountain. They are shown, above, tending the gardens.



Hattie Evans' remarkable story is told in the book, "Life By the Tracks," written by Virginia Downs and first published in 1984. Based on extensive research, interviews with railroad historians, local "old-timers," and the four Evans' children, this is an unforgettable chronicle of the memorable family that once lived by the steepest railroad tracks in the Eastern part of the United States. The book is available through our gift shop in the Station and online at ConwayScenic.com. Thanks to the Evans' family for the photos that appear here!