

Peary or Cook: Who Was First to the Pole? A Chronology

1903, June	Cook's First expedition to Mt. McKinley.
1905, July	Peary began expedition to North Pole on the <i>Roosevelt</i> , but unable to attain the Pole.
1906, May	Cook's Second expedition to Mt. McKinley.
1906, Sept. 16	Cook claimed attainment of the summit of Mount McKinley with Ed Barrill.
1906, Dec. 7	Cook Elected president of Explorer's Club.
1908, Feb.	Cook began North Pole Expedition.
1908, April 21	Cook claimed to have reached North Pole.
1908, April 1909, Feb.	Seasonal change and drifting ice prevented Cook and his party from traveling south back to base camp. They spent the polar night in a shelter.
1908, May	Peary complained to the <i>New York Times</i> about Cook exploiting Peary's methods and the Eskimos Peary trained; Peary accepted presidency of Explorers Club in Cook's absence.
1908, July 6	Peary departed from New York City on the <i>Roosevelt</i> for another attempt at the Pole.
1908	Discovery of dead Greenland explorers exposed Peary's errors in mapping coast of Northern Greenland in 1892.
1909, Feb. 18	Cook's expedition left shelter and started again for base camp.
1909, April 6	Peary claimed to have reached the North Pole
1909, April 15	Cook expedition reached Greenland; Harry Whitney and Cook meet at Annoatok; Whitney persuades Cook to leave instruments, North Pole flag, and damaged sled with Whitney for transportation on a later vessel.
1909, May 21	Cook reached Upernavik and announced publicly he reached pole on April 21, 1908.
1909, Aug. 9	Cook sailed for Denmark.
1909, Sept. 1	Cook cabled Belgium about his discovery; requested \$3,000 from <i>New York Herald</i> for his story.
1909, Sept. 5	Peary returned to civilization and sent telegram to his wife: "Have made good at last. I have the Pole. Am well." (from Peary, <i>The North Pole</i> .)
1909, Sept. 6	At dinner reception in Copenhagen, Cook received news of Peary's claim to have reached North Pole on April 6, 1909.
1909, Sept. 7	Cook received gold medal of Royal Geographical Society of Denmark.
1909, Sept. 8	Peary denounced Cook as a fraud.

1909, Sept. 9	Cook received honorary degree from University of Copenhagen and promised to present conclusive evidence of having reached the Pole.
1909, Sept. 21	Cook returned to the U.S. and was honored with a massive parade of more than 100,000 in New York City.
1909, Sept. 22	Cook held press conference and showed his 173 page journal.
1909, Sept. 26	Cook received telegram from Harry Whitney that Peary would not allow him to transport any of Cook's instruments or evidence.
1909, Oct. 13	Peary released to newspapers an account of interviews with Cook's Eskimos, who claim never to have left land.
1909, Oct. 14	Affidavit of Ed Barrill published; claiming that Cook ordered him to falsify Mt. McKinley diary entries; also that peak photo taken by Cook was a fake; Barrill received financial compensation for his statement.
1909, Oct. 16	Cook announced he was organizing an expedition to Mt. McKinley to retrieve evidence he left there.
1909, Oct. 17	Cook appeared before subcommittee of Explorers Club which was investigating his Mt. McKinley claim.
1909, Oct. 21	<i>New York Times</i> published letter from Knud Rasmussen that Cook's Eskimos verified Cook's story.
1909, Oct.	National Geographic Society investigated Peary's claim of attainment of the North Pole but Peary tried to pack the reviewing panel.
1909, Nov.	Cook went into hiding, fearing for his life, while at least six detectives shadowed him.
1909, Dec.21	Danish Commission concluded that the evidence it received (typewritten copies and reports of observations but no original calculations) was not sufficient to prove that Cook reached North Pole. This report undermined Cook in the U.S.
1910, Jan.	Peary began lecture tour. Received \$40,000 for a series of ghost-written articles to appear in <i>Hampton's Magazine</i> .
1910, March	U.S. House of Representatives held hearings on petition to promote Peary to Rear Admiral. Peary refused to submit original evidence for review.
1910, June 28	Expedition to Mt. McKinley sponsored by Explorers Club claimed to have found Cook's fake peak but was unable to reach the summit.
1911	Cook established Polar Publishing Company to publish <i>My Attainment of the Pole</i> . Toured to promote book and present his case.