

# ILLUSTRATED LECTURE

TO ACCOMPANY

## The Truth About The Pole

BY FREDERICK A. COOK

As delivered by the Explorer on his tour of great American cities during the year 1911.

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### INTRODUCTION

At the end of a dull summer in 1909, there came a cable message from an unknown town of Scotland. This message thrilled the whole world.

After nations had rivaled each other unsuccessfully for three hundred years in a life sacrificing Arctic task; suddenly, quietly, unpretentiously, the thing was done, without spending other people's money, without losing lives, with only the help of two boys and boundless savage energy, the victory was won. The race of centuries was ended. The prize went to him who deserved it, Dr. Cook.

About a week later, there came another message:

"Nailed the Stars and Stripes to the Pole."—Peary.

This message was sent to Dr. Cook, who replied, "Good, I am glad of it, there is glory enough for two."

The answer to this was "liar," "gold bricks," "stop thief."

Then followed a battle—a kind of civil war, for the recognition of Polar honors. With the power of the Government and the Navy behind Peary, Cook, a mere untitled citizen, must be downed at all cost. Mud-charged guns were leveled at Cook, but he maintained a gentlemanly attitude through the darkest campaign of bribery, and conspiracy and black dishonor in the world's history. Finally finding that he was in battle with a group of shameless pole cats—he simply withdrew—and went away to rest. The mill of infamy continued to grind but Dr. Cook is here now to uncover the black hand game which has spent its murderous force.

But first let us examine the case of Dr. Cook. The Pole was reached—honestly, reached on April 21, 1908, by Dr. Cook. This claim is endorsed by Admiral Schley, and the world's greatest explorer.

What I have to say here is in the nature of a message from Dr. Cook, illustrated by his own photographs taken enroute to the pole. He asks you to soar with him to Arctic heights, to other world dreams. When enroute let your heart beat to the passions of frigid wilds. Absorb the lure, the enraptured silence, the spiritual color, the charm and fascination of vigorous animal battles, wherein all nature is arrayed against little fur-clad mites of God's noblest creatures. In passing through the liquid air of zero's lowest we will drink the enervating wine of Borealis, while the soul is teased to the madness of the chill and blackness of the long winter night. And then let us awake to the crystal joys of glitter, of sunrise, and of frost extreme. Later we will bask with the budding emotions of the double-days of continued summer splendor. Now it is time to laugh with the buds of flowering plants while nature's incubator works overtime to start the little ones of the wilds. And then in the fullness of autumnal glory, let us drink again the Benedictine of mental harvest-time to sharpen the heart pulls for brotherly companionship and for love. Finally rejoice with the others as they climb the ladder of clean human endeavor, for the American Eagle has spread its wings of glory over the world's top.

### 1. YACHT.

In the summer of 1907, John R. Bradley wished to shoot big game in the Arctic. Dr. Cook's aim was for the Pole. Together they worked out the problem of an Arctic Expedition, without passing the hat, without public bombast, they secured this little yacht and quietly departed from the New England shores.

### 2. BERG.

With the prow cutting the North Atlantic waters northward, ever northward as the needle points, they soon entered the realm of double-days of glitter and midnight suns, along Greenland's icy mountains.

### 3. BOX HOUSE.

And then over enraptured seas of crystal glory the yacht pushed to the haunts of northernmost man. Here at Annoatok in North Greenland, Dr. Cook found the conditions to suit his ideas of a dash to the Pole. Supplies were landed and a box-house was built. In the picture the box-house is buried under a protective bank of snow. Here is the headquarters from which the polar campaign started—a base seven hundred miles in an air-line from the Pole.

### 4. FRANKE.

Rudolph Franke remained as Dr. Cook's able white companion. Together they began at once to put the willing hands of the little tribe of two hundred and fifty wild people about to the task of equipping a polar expedition.

### 5. SAVAGE HELPERS.

Here Dr. Cook found expert savage help to shape his sleds, to gather meat and furs, and to train his wolfish dogs to the task of getting to the pole.

### 6. NIGHT GROUP OF HUNTERS.

The sun left its parting glory on the South Sea late in October. Then followed the long winter night of four months. While the soul slept the hands were ever busy preparing for the northward advance which was to start at sunrise.

### 7. WOMEN.

Through the long, icy blackness the women were ever busy making boots, tanning skins, and fitting the furs for our polar jaunt. Every man, woman and child of this little tribe of savage folk took a vital interest in our success.

### 8. MAP.

The route planned was not the usual line of attack along the Greenland coast northward. This had been tried by many good men before—in it all had failed. The aim was to cross the unknown triangle between Greenland and Alaska.

### 9. WIVES AND SWEETHEARTS.

On February 19th, with the sunrise of 1908, the savage drivers said good-bye to their sweethearts and wives amid mingled tears and cheers.

### 10. DOGS.

And then with 11 sleds drawn by 11 of the finest dog-teams that ever wandered over the Arctic ice, all under the leash of 11 expert drivers, started over the rough lee of Smith Sound for the American shores.

### 11. SCHLEY LAND.

In climbing out of the Atlantic waters they crossed Schley Land, and came down on the Pacific Slopes in Bay Fjord. Here in severe storms and low temperature some dogs froze to death and the men suffered severe tortures.

### 12. ON PACIFIC WATERS.

Here in the new world of ice to the west, the thermometer sank still lower to 83 Fahrenheit, but with the stillness of Frost extreme life assumed new joys as we entered a new realm of animal delights beyond the haunts of man. From the hills there came the call of the Walrus—on their trail were polar bears. Each in his own way fired their fighting spirit, and urged the legs over longer distances.

### 13. MUSK OX BATTLE.

At other places herds of Musk Oxen were encountered and secured to feed men and dogs enroute to the polar sea. Thus in game trails, urged on with the excitement of choosing wild animals, feeding themselves at the expense of the land explored, the polar advance was made in a fighting rush.

### 14. NEW WONDERLAND.

Life at this time was not uninteresting. The dawn of the coming double-days of glitter and color sheered the wide splendor of a new wonderland. With other world delights they awoke to the liquid air of frost extreme, passed the enraptured haunts of the Arctic Hare, the den of the blue fox, and the snowy roost of the Ptarmigan.

### 15. SVARTEVOEG.

While the sleds pressed tracks with metallic notes enroute to the world's end—to the apple of the eye. Thus in overfed skins, stepping with legs

hardened to a long march we reached Svartevoeg, the northernmost point of Heiberg Island. The end of known land, and from here we looked out over the blue mystery of the Polar Sea. The eyes accustomed to the worst polar elements. In this glim distance, five hundred miles beyond the range of vision was the destination. The Pole seemed possible.

#### 16. OUT ON THE POLAR SEA.

On March 18th, stepping out on the grinding sweep of the circumpolar pack, plans were made to cover the last reach. Henceforth no game could be expected, therefore Dr. Cook thought that his chances of success were best with a few picked companions and a light equipment with which a rapid dash could be made. In these domes of snow a farewell dinner was prepared. The last full meal was eaten by the polar party.

#### 17. FROM THE KNOWN TO THE UNKNOWN.

Six men and six sleds were returned. With a train of four sleds carrying supplies for 80 days, drawn by 44 dogs under the leash of four Eskimos, Dr. Cook began the coursing of the Polar Sea. Thus, stepping from the known to the unknown life assumed a different prospect.

#### 18. OVER THE PACK EDGE.

Food was limited to pemmican, one pound a day, for man and dog. The pemmican is an Indian combination of dried meat and tallow. Water was obtained by melting ice or snow, and at night in bags of fur, on beds of ice, the weary body tried to rest the steady drag of overwork. In three days the little party forced sixty miles over the troubled ice near land, and then the party was again divided.

#### 19. AHWELAH AND ETUKISHOOK.

Two men and two sleds were sent back. Now Dr. Cook had but two companions, two faithful trustworthy Eskimo boys of twenty, who drove two teams of thirteen dogs each. Thus with the lightest possible equipment and with the most expert help, Dr. Cook planned to risk the chances of the Polar race.

#### 20. DR. COOK.

Then began the awful trans-boreal rush in which the soul was teased to madness and the body tortured to every conceivable hardship. Every unit of animal power was now put into leg force, and the pole was neared at the rate of about fifteen miles daily. As the days of depressing monotone were walked off, the snow glitter burned the faces, the wind bleached the nose and the frozen breath encased the head in a mask of ice.

#### 21. THE POLE BY WOLF POWER.

As the loads were reduced by the cruel necessity of the battle—one dog after another went into the stomach of his surviving companions. Thus the good, faithful, noble creatures gave their power and their lives in the battle for man's glory.

#### 22. BRADLEY LAND.

In the northward progress, as the last land sank from view men and dogs became uneasy in the new environment of mystery. Out of sight of land native life was inconceivable. Here fortune favored Dr. Cook. The air of crystal and the jewelled sea of mirrors kept up a continuous run of deceptive mirages, in which new lands and mountains of ice were pictured with striking impressiveness. These were but deceptive signs of land, but the boys in these signs found reason for an artificial belief in a nearness to land, which relieved the panic of the mystery of being adrift on a moving sea of ice. Between the 84 and 85 parallel looking westward the outline of a real land was noted. This was called Bradley Land, in honor of Dr. Cook's friend and companion, John R. Bradley.

#### 23. MAKING SNOW HOUSES.

In going north of this land there was little to please the eye or arouse the spirits. No signs of life were near. Heavy ice was crossed which appeared like land-ice, a trail was forced over an irregular surface. Occasional lines of water were abridged by abutting corners or small fields. The night in the northward movement gradually merged into perpetual day, and all hours and all days were the same. At the end of a day's march a halt was made at a snow bank. Here blocks were cut and in spiral circles a dome was walked.

#### 24. IN BEE-HIVES OF CRYSTAL.

In this bee-hive of icy crystal the frost tortures were eased. Here the teeth were set to the grind of cold food, which half satisfied the stomach and later we slept off the day's pain of the never ending walk. Thus the long poleward drive was forced over neck-breaking ice irregularities, with heart breaking strains of human emotions. At last they reached a point.

#### 25. LOOKING OVER THE ENDLESS BLUE.

A hundred miles from the Pole. In the days of gloom and fatigue preceding, with steady life sapping winds to drive deeper despair to its lowest reaches, the boys climbed a hummock and looked over the endless blue. Later, with big tears in his eyes, Ahwelah said, "It is well to die, beyond is impossible." But Dr. Cook felt otherwise. Four hundred miles

of troubled ice was behind them. The Pole was almost in sight—but one hundred miles beyond.

### 26. OVER PURPLE FIELDS OF GLORY.

The time had arrived for the spiritual alarm to strike. The ice in prospect was superb, the weather improved. A liquid joy of color and inspiration fell over the cheerless blue, and with a few words the Eskimos raised their whips and off the dogs started on that last reach. With success in prospect all the world seemed brighter. Thus, after 35 days of inhuman effort, the explorer stepped over fields of glory, climbed gilded walls of sparkle, and at last pierced the Boreal Centre, and fixed the Stars and Stripes to the North Pole.

### 27. AT THE POLE.

The Victory of the Battle of centuries was theirs, and thus the American Eagle spread its wings of glory over the world's top. It was April 21, 1908. Two days were spent at the pole to make observations, and to study the environment. The Pole was a cheerless spot. No Pole, only a moving sea of ice, fields of purple snows, no land, no life—nothing to relieve the monotony of frost. They were the only pulsating creatures in a dead world of ice.

### 28. MAP.

Now the North Pole was reached, but as backs were turned on the morning of April 23d, to face home, and this known world, the prospect of new troubles arose. In the intoxication of progress in the outward journey the difficulty and dangers of the return were not thought of, but now we saw that our return was to be a fight for life against famine and frost. A return course was set somewhat west of our northward trail.

### 29. RETURNING.

Day after day, week after week, the long weary march was forced. It was a race with the advancing season. Caught in an unexpected drift, with storms, cloud and fog to blind their eyes to exact position. Eventually the explorers were carried by the drift far into the unknown world of desolation far to the west. And when at last land was reached they were along the verge of starvation.

### 30. BACK TO LIFE.

The retreat to Greenland was cut off, the only chance for life was to go south with the drifting ice in the hope of getting subsistence from the expected game. Soon a bear was secured—and the big juicy bear steaks went to long unsounded depths. Here they ate until more was impossible. Then they danced about with gastric glee and after ate some more.

### 31. FIGHTS WITH THE MUSK OXEN.

Thus by a hand to hand encounter with the wild animals, life was just barely kept within the body month after month until the curtain of the next night drew its folds of gloom. The dogs were given wolf freedom. Then by the knife, the lance and the line, the musk ox was captured.

### 32. THE UNDERGROUND DEN.

And then in a reconstructed cave of rocks, eating the meat and burning the fat of the musk ox, the eye was kept open under the lash of famine during the winter and night of 1908 and 1909 at Cape Sparbo on the American side.

### 33. THE HOMESTRETCH.

With the sunrise of 1909 the trio of wanderers pulled themselves together and by another long walk of three hundred miles, returned to Greenland to the Eskimo homes. Thus the North Pole victors returned to the starting point after fourteen months of the hardest run of adventure that history has to record.

### 34.

Dr. Cook says that the glory of the success of the Pole victory belongs first to the little men of the farthest north, and then to their noble dogs, and especially to the two faithful boys, Ahweleh and Etukishook, and that since the Pole was reached over the graves of the earlier pathfinders, to their memory should be erected the first monument for the Polar conquest. After he asks for no pay, no national endorsement, no medals, but he insists upon an honest treatment of an honest effort to reach the Boreal Centre.

THE PEARY INTERESTS who by Dr. Cook's claim lose the monopoly of the Polar game have stooped to bribery and conspiracy and forgery to discredit Dr. Cook's prior accomplishment. These Peary interests have for years drawn easy money from the public, immense profits in a trade for ivory and from the Eskimo's furs, and therefore, for commercial reasons, it did not pay to discover the Pole until Dr. Cook stopped the game of fleecing the public by a quick unaided dash to the Pole.

Of course, Peary will stir heaven and earth, and the other place (mostly the other place) to down Cook—but Cook wins.

He is endorsed by all of the world's most famous Arctic Explorers, among whom are Rear Admiral W. S. Schley, Gen. A. W. Greely, Captain Ronald Amundsen, Captain Otto Sverdrup and Captain E. B. Baldwin. Here is proof, the only proof ever offered by any explorer.