

A MEMORIAL TO PEARY

The National Geographic Society Dedicates Monument in Arlington National Cemetery to Discoverer of the North Pole

A HISTORIC ceremony, of especial interest to members of the National Geographic Society, took place at Arlington National Cemetery April 6, 1922, when a memorial erected by the Society at the grave of Rear-Admiral Robert E. Peary, U. S. N., was unveiled upon the thirteenth anniversary of Peary's discovery of the North Pole.

Not since the Armistice Day funeral of the unknown hero, who is buried at the entrance to its amphitheater, has such a notable assemblage been present at Arlington as that which honored the man who reached the top of the world, goal of intrepid Arctic explorers for many centuries.

This gathering included the President of the United States and Mrs. Harding, William Howard Taft, Chief Justice of the United States; the Secretary of State and Mrs. Hughes; Edwin Denby, Secretary of the Navy; Col. Theodore Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy; the Ambassador of France and Mme. Jusserand, and members of the Board of Trustees of the National Geographic Society: Alexander Graham Bell, John Joy Edson, Charles J. Bell, David Fairchild, C. Hart Merriam, O. P. Austin, George R. Putnam, George Shiras, 3d, Col. E. Lester Jones, Grant Squires, Rear-Admiral C. M. Chester, Frederick V. Coville, Rudolph Kauffmann, T. L. Macdonald, S. N. D. North, John Oliver La Gorce, J. Howard Gore, George Otis Smith, O. H. Tittmann, Henry White, and Stephen T. Mather.

In the audience also were members of both houses of Congress, Major General John A. Lejeune, Commandant of U. S. Marine Corps; Brigadier General David L. Brainard, of the Greely Expedition, who with Lockwood in 1882 won the record of the farthest north, previously held by Great Britain for 300 years; Admiral R. E. Coontz, Rear-Admiral Cary T. Grayson, Rear-Admiral W. A. Moffett, Rear-Admiral W. L. Rodgers, Rear-Admiral

T. L. Latimer, Rear-Admiral John S. Carpenter; Rear-Admiral L. E. Gregory, Rear-Admiral M. T. Endicott, and Capt. R. E. Bakenhus, representing the Bureau of Yards and Docks, Peary's own corps in the Navy (formerly the Civil Engineer Corps); Rear-Admiral George W. Baird; a Masonic delegation from Kane Lodge of New York City, and many other government officials, explorers, distinguished representatives of scientific organizations and universities, together with hundreds of prominent citizens of the Nation's Capital and friends of the discoverer of the North Pole who came from distant cities.

Companies of bluejackets, marines, and infantrymen, under the command of Capt. T. S. Brand, of the 64th Infantry, formed a hollow square around the memorial during the exercises.

Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, President of the National Geographic Society, presided and made the introductory address. The Secretary of the Navy, Edwin Denby, and the Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Theodore Roosevelt, whose family name was borne by the vessel used by Peary in his Arctic voyage, paid high tribute to the explorer. The Rev. Dr. Charles Wood offered the invocation.

THE EXPLORER'S DAUGHTER UNVEILED THE MONUMENT

Mrs. Edward Stafford, daughter of Rear-Admiral Peary, drew aside the Union Jack which veiled the memorial, as the United States Marine Band played the National Anthem. While the distinguished company stood with bared heads, she slowly hoisted, upon a flagstaff near by, the historic silken Stars and Stripes which her father carried wrapped about his body and unfurled at the North Pole to signify that an American was the first to attain it. She was escorted by her brother, Robert E. Peary, Jr.

Mrs. Robert E. Peary, companion of her husband on several of his Arctic ex-



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AT THE MOMENT OF THE UNVEILING OF THE PEARY MEMORIAL IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY, ON APRIL 6, 1922

On the platform from right to left: The Secretary of State and Mrs. Hughes; William Howard Taft, the Chief Justice of the United States, who was President of the United States when the North Pole was discovered, and upon whose recommendation to Congress the explorer was created a Rear-Admiral; the Ambassador of France and Mme. Jusserand, Dr. Gilbert Grosvenor, President of the National Geographic Society; the President of the United States and Mrs. Harding, Mrs. Robert E. Peary, Dr. E. W. Nelson, Captain Robert A. Bartlett, Edwin Denby, Secretary of the Navy, and Rev. Dr. Charles Wood. Partly concealed by the flag (at the right) is Colonel Theodore Roosevelt, Assistant Secretary of the Navy.

peditions, was the guest of special honor at the ceremonies.

Captain Robert A. Bartlett, explorer and navigator, companion of Peary upon his triumphant expedition, brushed away tears as speaker after speaker paid tribute to his beloved chief. Another figure of interest was Matt Henson, Peary's faithful aid, the only man beside his leader and four Eskimos who has stood at the apex of the world.

THE ADDRESS OF GILBERT GROSVENOR,
PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIETY

Dr. Grosvenor, in his introductory address as presiding officer, said:

"On a late summer day in 1891, Peary's ship, the *Kite*, was working its way through the ice-fields off the Greenland coast, seeking an anchorage, when a cake of ice became wedged against the rudder, causing the wheel of the old ship suddenly to reverse and one of the spokes to pin Peary against the casement. Before he could be released both bones in his left leg had snapped.

"What should he do after this distressing accident? Return to Washington, as his companions urged him, and come back to Greenland later, when his badly broken limb had healed? 'No,' said Peary, 'my friends have invested their money in my enterprise and I must make good to them *now*.'

"So the surgeon strapped the leg to a board, and on an improvised stretcher he was carried ashore and deposited on that bleak, desolate land, while by his command the ship and surgeon hurried home lest the entire party should be caught in the ice unprovisioned for the long winter.

"Thus, strapped to a board, Peary began his first campaign in the Arctic.

"Many in this notable gathering have heard Peary declare, as he loved to so often, that 'Mrs. Peary always seemed to foresee whether she could help most by going north with the expedition or by staying behind to speed the auxiliary parties.'

"Fortunately for American history, her intuition had impelled her to accompany her husband on this, his first expedition, in spite of the fact that no white woman had previously wintered with an Arctic party. She nursed him so skillfully that

at the Christmas games arranged for the Eskimo he outraced on snowshoes not only all the natives, but also his own men.

"The following spring he ascended to the summit of the great ice-cap which covers the interior of Greenland, 5,000 to 8,000 feet in elevation, and sped northward for 500 miles through a region where the foot of man had never trod before, in temperatures ranging from 10° to 50° below zero. This sledding journey of 1,300 miles round trip, made in less than ten months after his leg was broken, in boldness of conception and brilliancy of results is unsurpassed in Arctic history.

EXTRAORDINARY COURAGE MATCHED BY
REMARKABLE INTELLECT

"Peary's extraordinary courage was matched by an equally remarkable intellect. He possessed the resourcefulness and patience in detail of the inventor, the precision of an engineer, the generalship of a great commander. Every campaign was planned with such minute care that though he took hundreds of men north with him, he brought them all back safely, with the exception of two who lost their lives in accidents for which the leader was in no wise responsible.

"It was inevitable that the prize for which all nations had striven for many centuries should be won by such a combination of pluck and brains.

"We are proud to recall that Peary was a member of the National Geographic Society from its organization, in 1888. His first address to The Society, describing a journey of exploration through Nicaragua, was given in that year and published in the first volume of The Society's proceedings. On his return from the north, his first public address was always made before our Society. His last public appearance was on the platform of the National Geographic Society, when he came to the meeting, in spite of his doctor's orders, to present Stefansson in 1919, just returned from six years in the north; his last article was written for The Society's Magazine, and the last photograph of him was taken on the steps of The Society's buildings.

"He was ever an ardent supporter of The Society's ambition to enlist the interest of every man and woman in scientific work and of The Society's earnest



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY VOICING THE NATION'S APPRECIATION OF THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF REAR-ADMIRAL, ROBERT E. PEARY
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efforts to promote international acquaintance and friendship by making geographic knowledge intelligible and attractive to all persons. No member was more enthusiastic than he, nor pushed harder to increase its numbers, nor took greater happiness in helping it grow to more than 700,000 members.

"When he retired from active exploration he accepted election to The Society's Board of Trustees.

"We may recall in humble pride that The Society, in Peary's kind estimation, did all that it could to advance his work and sustain his efforts. Every honor that The Society could bestow was also his. He was elected one of its six honorary members in 1903; the Hubbard Gold Medal was presented to him on behalf of The Society by President Roosevelt in 1906 for his Farthest North, and in 1909 a Special Gold Medal, four inches in diameter, celebrating the discovery of the North Pole, was struck off in his honor and presented to him.

"I voice the feeling of every member of this great organization when I say to Mrs. Peary that our hearts are filled with inexpressible tenderness and gratitude that the precious privilege of placing this monument at his resting-place has been granted by her to the National Geographic Society, which loved him so well, and which with all the world rejoices that he 'made good at last,' and that an American has become the equal of Hudson, Magellan, and Columbus."

THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY'S ADDRESS

The Hon. Edwin Denby, Secretary of the Navy, spoke as follows:

"The discovery of the North Pole by Civil Engineer Robert E. Peary, U. S. N., on April 6, 1909, was a supreme achievement in courage, endurance, and tenacity of purpose. His victory will stand forever as a paramount example of the conquest of spirit over matter.

"When the dispatch, 'Stars and Stripes nailed to the North Pole,' went flashing through the crisp Labrador air from the wireless station at Indian Harbor, all the civilized nations were thrilled with surprise and interest by the wonderful news; but those who had studied the history of Arctic exploration in the past three hundred years, and had followed Peary in his

twenty-three years of brutal hard labor, with cold, hunger, and darkness, blinding snow and dazzling Arctic light, with terrific wind and impassable water and probable death before him, thanked God that the will of this man had proved stronger than the forces of nature.

"For twenty-three years, through discouragement and opposition, and by labor superhuman that would have worn out the courage of most men, he fitted out expedition after expedition, and hurled his money, time, and energy against the almost impregnable fortress of the North. The result was the discovery of Melville and Heilprin Land; and a solution of the long-disputed question whether Greenland was an island; much new knowledge of the Arctic Highlanders was obtained; the greatest meteorites known were found and brought to the United States, and, at last, at the age of 53, he reached the North Pole, the goal for three hundred years of daring dreamers. The discovery of the POLE proved that the spirit of man is indomitable in its struggle with physical obstacles and the price of immortality is pain.

"In the first years of his service in the Navy, Peary had the experience of most Navy men—he was called upon to accomplish what was regarded as the impossible. The young engineer was directed to make plans for a new pier at Key West, Florida, which the contractors said could not be built. Peary was sent to build it. He did build it, and at a saving of \$30,000 on the estimated cost.

"Later the department ordered him to Nicaragua as Chief of the Interoceanic Ship Canal Survey. Here he acquired experience of the utmost value in his future Arctic work—he learned to manage men, gained experience in equipping expeditions, in making camp under adverse conditions, and in traversing wild and unexplored countries. His motto was, 'Find a way or make one'—*Inveniam viam aut faciam.*'

"Robert Edwin Peary, son of Charles N. and Mary Wiley Peary, was born in Cresson, Pennsylvania, where his parents were living at that time, May 6, 1856.

"He came from an old family of Maine lumbermen. He was of French and Saxon blood and he numbered among his ancestors many seamen, soldiers, and pio-



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THE PEARY MEMORIAL, UNVEILED BY THE EXPLORER'S DAUGHTER

On one of the several expeditions to the Far North when Mrs. Peary accompanied her husband, Marie Ahnighito Peary, affectionately known to the American public as the Snow Baby (now Mrs. Edward Stafford), was born, within the Arctic Circle* and nearer the North Pole than any other white child. Her brother, Robert E. Peary, Jr., stands at her left. All the continents are carved in low relief on the granite globe (see page 646).

neers. The fiery French imagination from one side and Anglo-Saxon firmness from the other were blended in a temperament well suited for his great work.

"On the island, which he owned, Eagle Island in Casco Bay, with its rugged coast, his famous ship *Roosevelt* was planned. It is a great satisfaction to this country to feel that this Arctic expedition, together with the ship, was American. The *Roosevelt* was built of American timber and metal, in an American ship-yard, engineered by an American firm, and constructed on American design. Even the most trivial items of supplies were American, although Captain 'Bob' Bartlett and the crew were Newfoundlanders, our next-door neighbors.

"The ship was built with a knowledge of the requirements of Arctic navigation gained by experience of six former voyages into the frozen North. So the expedition went north in an American-built ship, by the American route, and in com-

mand of an American, to win an American trophy.

"Peary tells us, 'I have always been proud that I was born an American, but never so proud as when in that biting, sunlit Arctic day I saw the Stars and Stripes waving at the apex of the earth and told myself that an American had set "Old Glory" there. As I watched it fluttering in the crisp air of the Pole, I thought of the twenty-three years of my own life which had been spent in laboring toward that goal, and realized that at last I had made good; that I could now lay at the feet of my country a trophy which the greatest nations of the world had been struggling to attain for nearly four hundred years.'

"At this time Peary would not like us to forget the splendid aid of the twenty-one brave and patriotic men who composed the personnel of the expedition. Foremost was Captain Robert A. Bartlett, 'Captain Bob,' as he was affectionately

called, whom Peary describes as 'tireless, faithful, and enthusiastic' and 'true as the compass.'

"The question of money to equip and furnish men and food was a serious one, and the Stars and Stripes would not have been nailed to the Pole by an American except for generous aid from the Peary Arctic Club. The President, Morris K. Jessup; the Secretary, Herbert L. Bridgman; General Thomas H. Hubbard, and others contributed large amounts.

"The scientific societies and authorities of the world, without exception or reservation, have recognized the high and authentic value of Peary's work, and few men have received such unanimous acclaim and reward of merit. More than a score of medals have been presented to him by the great geographical and exploring societies of Europe and America.

"It is often said that republics are proverbially ungrateful. This is not true in regard to Peary. The President of the United States, William Howard Taft, and the Secretary of the Navy, with just pride that the honor had come to the United States, requested of Congress that fitting recognition be accorded to Peary for his great achievement.

"Congress, on March 4, 1911, authorized that Civil Engineer Robert E. Peary, U. S. N., be placed on the retired list of the Navy with the rank and highest pay of a rear-admiral, dating from April 16, 1909; also giving him the thanks of Congress for his Arctic explorations resulting in the discovery of the North Pole.

"Previously the thanks of Congress had been bestowed only upon those who had won battles on land or sea to the glory of their country.

"So, in this hallowed Westminster Abbey of America; here, surrounded by the noble men of the Navy and Army who gave their lives, but left behind them immortal glory, and who won the never-ceasing gratitude of their country—here we come, like the Egyptians of old, to erect a monument on which to carve a record of Robert Edwin Peary's wonderful deeds of bravery."

TRIBUTE BY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE
NAVY, COLONEL THEODORE ROOSEVELT

"It is a very real privilege to be permitted to speak here at the Admiral

Peary Memorial. To our family Admiral Peary was more than a name and an achievement. He was a personality. Again and again I have heard my father discuss him, and always in terms of high admiration.

"The march of the modern civilization of man has been predicated largely on the impulse for inquiry. From the 7th century B. C., when the Phœnicians sailed, by direction of the Pharaohs, down the coast of Africa; from the time when Hanno, the Carthaginian, skirted the west coast of that continent, down to the voyages and explorations of the present day, man has ceaselessly struggled for knowledge, development, and dominion. Admiral Peary is a great figure in this advance of man.

"Our own country is built by the toil and hardships of the pioneers, who pushed their way ever west through the then trackless wilderness. It is this spirit, transmuted, which forms the basis of our American Government and ideals. Should the steel of our national fiber lose the temper which made such achievements possible, our nation will be on the decline.

"In the nation-builders of all times and countries, there was the ceaseless urge to achievement. Every one of them heard constantly the whisper,

"Something lost behind the ranges,
Lost and waiting—go."

From Columbus to Peary, with farseeing eyes, they pressed on their quests. Their triumphs were not triumphs easily obtained, in soft circumstances. From Columbus to Peary they met and overcame, by their character and ability, obstacle piled on obstacle.

"Admiral Peary will stand to the generations of Americans in the future as an incentive to high endeavor. To me, Admiral Peary's life is epitomized in the splendid lines from Tennyson's 'Ulysses':
"To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

INSCRIPTIONS ON THE MONUMENT

The great globe rests upon a massive base, also made of white granite from the quarries of Maine, the State that Peary loved. Upon one side of the base is the Latin motto, "*Inveniam viam aut faciam*" (I will find a way or make one), which the explorer often quoted and which seems a fitting epitome of his notable career.



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VIEW OF THE PEARY MEMORIAL, LOOKING NORTHWARD TOWARD THE AMPHITHEATER

Under the motto is the inscription:

Erected by the National Geographic Society. Dedicated April 6, 1922, the President of the United States, the Chief Justice of the United States, the Secretary of State, the Secretary of the Navy, the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, and Board of Trustees of the National Geographic Society officiating.

The other sides, respectively, bear the legends:

Robert Edwin Peary, Discoverer of
North Pole April 6, 1909.

Rear Admiral U. S. N., Civil Engineer,
Explorer, Scientist, 1856-1920.

His Beloved Wife
Josephine Diebitsch, 1863 —

For many generations to come the unique memorial, designed in accord with suggestions Peary dictated to his wife shortly before his death, will stand as a landmark in the silent city of the nation's hero dead. It consists of an oblate spheroid, representing the earth, with the land masses carved in low relief upon its surface (see page 644). At the point on the massive globe which represents the North Pole is a bronze star.

This star points toward the north, in the direction of Arlington's beautiful memorial amphitheater, only a few hundred yards distant.