



# **The Longest Walk: The Record of our World's First Crossing of the Entire Americas (2013 Edition)**

*George Meegan*

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George Meegan is an adventurer, lecturer, school reformer, and world traveller. He holds eight Guinness World Records, the most official world records for any European. This includes “The Longest Unbroken March of All Time” that is described in this book. The epic journey he made from Tierra del Fuego, South America to Prudhoe Bay, Alaska, 19,019 miles, was completed in 2,425 days with 41 million steps while burning out 12 and-half pairs of hiking boots. He got shot at and chased by a one-legged gaucho, traversed the historically impassable Darien Gap, married his Japanese sweetheart, became a father...twice!, and visited President Jimmy Carter at his home. Arriving in New York, he was covered by “People” magazine, and every other popular media, with appearances on:

- Larry King Live
- Today Show (three times)
- CBS Morning News
- Good Morning America
- 11 PM Show
- Studs Terkel Radio
- The Joe Franklin Show
- Phil Donahue
- Hugh Downs

Across America, the World Walker was preceded town-to-town by media showings that George had discovered the ‘American Dream’! From New York, he proceeded through northern USA, into the Yukon, and on to the final step into the Arctic Circle. On the afternoon of September 18, 1983, he crossed frozen tundra to the edge of the Arctic Ocean, and dipped his hand into the cold, slivery water. It was done. He fell to his knees and wept. At age 31, George Meegan had walked 19,019 unbroken miles, and rose from the water’s edge to face a new challenge of dealing with new-found fame.

The Longest Walk took place between 1977 and 1983. In 2000, he completed almost 500km to reach Barrow, Alaska for the ultimate culmination, in the largest Eskimo settlement in the world. At the historic millennium, Meegan uniquely got the USA government, by order of the White House, to ‘fall down on knees’ and apologize before the media to the First Nations for legion historic travesties. At the time, no human had ever traversed the entire Americas, be it by vehicle or even aircraft; but of course, Meegan was on foot. Today, nearly three decades later, the feat remains unequalled.

His book is held at the USA Library of Congress, and he is pictured in the Guinness Book of World Records, Japan, GB and the USA. The adventure has been excerpted as an elective text for Japanese universities, and was judged as ‘inspirational’ and put into Japan’s National Curriculum. It has been converted into an audio version distributed nationwide in English speaking countries.

The story The Longest Walk found its way to Dodd, Mead as Meegan arrived in New York. Just before publication, the book editor died, and then, after 199-years, Dodd, Mead slipped beneath the waves into

bankruptcy. So, notwithstanding powered coverage, it was too late. The sunk publisher took the book down with them, after the author had been told it was bound to become a bestseller. In 1989, Paragon House pressed out a few thousand copies, but few saw it. Xlibris of Philadelphia resurrected it; all in all, not a success. Still, from time to time, Meegan received letters asking about the abrupt vanish of The Longest Walk. Now, the answer is the 2013 Third Edition. This is the original story, with unpublished photos, an extended appendix, and Yoshiko, his wife on the journey, makes an encore!

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