

returned to Maudheim on 30 May 1951, 11 days after the Sun had set for the winter, much to the relief of the understandably worried Gjaever. Of their return, Swithinbank writes that 'they were fit and well,' a condition that hardly applied to Reece, for two months later he had his eye removed by the young doctor Ove Wilson, an operation performed on radio instructions from a Swedish specialist and described in some detail. The reader is left wondering whether the eye might have been saved if the patient had returned to Maudheim immediately after his accident. It is sad to add that the gallant but unlucky Reece was killed in an air crash near Resolute, Arctic Canada, in 1960.

In 1951–52 a shorter field season was imposed by the probable arrival of *Norsel* in early January for the evacuation of Maudheim. While geological and glaciological parties were deployed for further reconnaissance in the mountains to the southeast, Swithinbank took part in a seismic survey traverse under the leadership of Gordon Robin, who had devised a sledge-mounted caboose to be towed behind a Weasel to serve as laboratory and living and sleeping quarters. The arrangement worked very well, and was copied by later expeditions. Ice depths were measured at intervals southeastwards from Maudheim to a furthest point on the ice cap south of 74°S, where, at an altitude of 2700 m, an ice thickness of 2000 m was found.

The expedition returned to Europe in February 1952, with a rich harvest of scientific results to be published by Norsk Polarinstitut in a series to which Swithinbank contributed six monographs on his part in the glaciological work. Now he has added this well-balanced general account of the expedition, with excellent photographs and maps. Of his companions, Swithinbank makes some less than flattering comments, which he offsets by including distinctly unflattering comments about himself by companions. In fact, and transcending the scientific work, the members lived in remarkable harmony for more than two years, which Swithinbank attributes to 'each one of us, to the best of our ability, [leaning] over backwards to suppress our national prejudices and preconceptions' (page 226).

This book deserves to be widely read, especially by those interested in the critical advances in field research and technology made by the Norwegian–British–Swedish Antarctic Expedition. (Geoffrey Hattersley-Smith, *The Crossways*, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 2AG.)

JOURNEY TO THE SHORES OF THE POLAR SEA. John Franklin. 1998. Dartmouth, Nova Scotia: CD-Academia Book Co (Arctic Discovery vol. 1). Compact disk reproducing 768 p, illustrated. ISBN 1-894127-01-3.

SECOND EXPEDITION TO THE SHORES OF THE POLAR SEA. John Franklin. 1998. Dartmouth, Nova

Scotia: CD-Academia Book Co (Arctic Discovery vol. 2). Compact disk reproducing 478 p, illustrated. ISBN 1-894127-04-8.

Readers of *Polar Record* will need little introduction to John Franklin's two books about his Arctic land expeditions, 1819–1822 and 1825–27. The first expedition was sent in conjunction with William Edward Parry's seaborne expedition in the hope that their combined results might indicate the route of a Northwest Passage to the Pacific. Franklin and his party descended the Coppermine River and explored and charted parts of the Arctic coast before making an arduous return journey. Although 11 of the original 20 men of the expedition died of starvation, exhaustion, murder (in the case of Midshipman Robert Hood), and execution (of the voyageur Michel), and the remainder only survived due to help from local Indians, Franklin returned to England a hero.

Franklin's second expedition was sent to extend his explorations of the Arctic coast west from the Coppermine River to Icy Cape, Alaska. Descending the Mackenzie River, Franklin explored to the west and John Richardson explored to the east, completing the mapping of an extensive part of the Arctic coastline and returning with little incident.

When the books were published in 1823 and 1828, respectively, they were both hugely successful. Despite Franklin's rather tedious writing style, each book is today a classic, which, in a well-kept copy of its original John Murray edition, will cost the collector considerably more than £1000. Even the excellent Hurtig reprint of several decades ago has become almost prohibitively expensive. Therefore it is a great service to the polar community that these books have now been published on CD.

The publisher, CD-Academia Books, has clearly thought through its new series of books on Arctic exploration, of which these are the first two volumes. The entire books are produced on the CD both as an image of the original pages and also as a computer-readable text, which is not only much easier to read on a computer screen, but can be searched for retrieval of data.

The issue of variability of computers is dealt with by the CDs including an installer for an Acrobat reader. The ease of viewing is also increased by the inclusion of a zoom feature for small screens and by a 'full screen view' that allows the increase of the viewing area by 15–25% (depending on the size of the monitor screen), making the text easier to read. The publisher has also attempted to make the file size as small as possible to speed up the process of loading the files.

These CDs, and their successors, are likely to become very valuable additions to the literature of Arctic exploration. The publisher should be commended for producing them. (K.B. Shabby, History Department, Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, USA.)