

## NOTES ON BOOKS

### *De Østgrønlandske Eskimoers Historie.* By EJNAR MIKKELSEN.

1934 recalled three important dates in the history of East Greenland, the discovery of the Angmagssalik Eskimos by Gustav Holm in 1884, the setting up of the East Coast mission and trading station in 1894, and the extension to another station in Scoresby Sound in 1924. Captain Mikkelsen has himself been closely connected with the more recent events, and is specially qualified to write of the earlier, in this jubilee account of the East Greenland Eskimos. The subjects dealt with include: the former population of Northern East Greenland; reasons for the extinction of the Eskimos along the coast from Scoresby Sound northwards; the Eskimos of South-east Greenland; the people of the Angmagssalik district, and the founding of the station; the Angmagssalik mission's first year; the re-population of South-east Greenland from Angmagssalik; Angmagssalik during forty years; hunting trips by South-west Greenlanders to South-east Greenland; the possibilities of Greenlandic occupation of the North-east Coast; preparations for the formation of a colony in Scoresby Sound; its installation; its development during the first ten years; the building of supporting depots for Greenlanders travelling between Scoresby Sound and Angmagssalik.

M. A. S.

### *Sledge.* By MARTIN LINDSAY. With 5 maps and 48 half-tone plates. (Cassell. 21s.)

*Sledge* is the record of the "British Trans-Greenland Expedition 1934" written by its leader. The main purpose of this expedition was to fix the position, and if possible the height, of the "New Mountains" which Gino Watkins discovered, in 1930, in the Kangerdlugssuak district of East Greenland and which now bear his name. Mr Lindsay could only spend one season out of England. The east coast of Greenland is open only long enough for an expedition with several months work to do to come or go; not to do both. Therefore Mr Lindsay decided to sail early in the year to the more open west coast; sledge across the ice-cap, roughly following Lat. 70° N.; then, turning southwards, make a running survey along the inner limit of the coastal mountains; and come out to the sea at Angmagssalik in time to catch a ship back to Europe. The sledge journey involved was something over 1000 miles.

Andrew Croft went out to Jakobshavn in the autumn of 1933. He spent the winter buying dogs, learning how to drive them and moving a large quantity of food to the edge of the ice-cap. Lieutenants Lindsay and Godfrey arrived the next spring. With as little delay as possible they began their journey, much hindered by ice conditions in the fjords and lack of snow in the valleys of the hinterland.

The ice-cap greeted them with morasses and thaw channels; but beyond this low-level zone they found better conditions and travelled by night at an average of about 20 miles a march. The running survey down the coastal range proceeded according to plan except that, till months afterwards, they did not know that they had obtained sights of the Watkins Mountains.

The book is a light-hearted description of sledging from the human angle.

J. M. S.

### *The Voyage of the Chelyuskin.* By members of the expedition. Translated by ALEC BROWN. With numerous plates and maps. (Chatto & Windus. 18s.)

The Soviet Government have, for a long time, been anxious to open up the North East Passage to ordinary shipping. To make the voyage in an ice breaker would prove nothing. Therefore Captain Schmidt was ordered to take an ordinary 4000 tons iron cargo vessel, with a very mixed crew, from Leningrad to Vladivostok.

For about half her voyage the *Chelyuskin* sailed in company with an ice-breaker. But when the ice-breaker had to go back for repairs the crew of the cargo vessel "bore onwards in a wild but happy kind of enthusiasm".

Nor was this enthusiasm damped when the *Chelyuskin* was caught in the drifting pack-ice, and, finally, crushed and sank in the depth of winter 150 kilometres off the barren coast of Siberia. One member of the crew was drowned when the ship went down but the rest—even the baby who had been born on the voyage—were rescued by aeroplane during the next two months.

The voyage was unsuccessful in its avowed object, but the world knows more about the North East Passage as a result.

J. M. S.