

CHAPTER VI

POLAR CANADA

THE northern seacoast of America was first reached in 1771 by Samuel Hearne, who, in search of copper and to extend trade, attained the mouth of the Coppermine River. His successor, Alexander Mackenzie, reached the delta of the Mackenzie River in July, 1798. The tracing of the coast between these two isolated points was due to the energy of that great explorer, John Franklin, in two land journeys, 1819-1822 and 1825-1827 (Franklin: "First and Second Journey to the Shores of Polar Ocean." 1824 and 1828).

Under conditions of almost insuperable difficulties and of extreme hardships, with his indomitable assistants George Back and John Richardson, Franklin from his headquarters at Fort Enterprise, $64^{\circ} 25' N.$, $113^{\circ} W.$, filled in the coast line from the Coppermine east to Dease Strait, in the expedition of 1819-1822. The explorations of 1825 were made from a station on Great Bear Lake. Richardson traced the unknown coast between the Mackenzie and the Coppermine. Franklin, working westward from the Mackenzie, followed the coast to Return Reef, $149^{\circ} W.$ Thomas Simpson