

Although the text concentrates on the lives and influences of the grandfathers, Solomon Mack and Asael Smith, some attention is devoted to the grandmothers, Lydia Gates Mack and Mary Duty Smith, thus dispelling any fears of male chauvinism. Alongside biographical information concerning all four of the Prophet's grandparents, the author has included two chapters on the writings of Joseph's grandfathers, as well as a chapter containing a family history.

Mechanically, the book is without flaw. Clearly and logically organized, it is also an attractive volume. Well bound and handsomely illustrated, it brings credit to both author and publisher. Of particular value are the maps, which are unusually clear and professionally executed.

Although generally well written, the book is not without fault. The title raises false hopes. Only one small segment of "Joseph Smith's New England Heritage" is presented. One would hope that more of the heritage would follow in other volumes. Reprinting so much material, a majority of which is available elsewhere, raises serious doubts concerning its purpose and value. Clearly, more justification is needed to explain the inclusion of 66 pages of reprinted material in a total text of 159 pages.

On balance, however, it is an excellent book. Richard Lloyd Anderson has succeeded in cleaning up a family record besmirched by historical mudslinging. He convinces his readers that Joseph Smith and his parents "matured under intense exposure to moral responsibility, unselfishness, personal tenacity, intellectual awareness, and intelligent sincerity."

GEOFFREY ASHE, THOR HEYERDAHL, HELGE INGSTAD, J. V. LUCE, BETTY J. MEGGERS, AND BIRGITTA L. WALLACE. *The Quest for America*. London: Pall Mall Press, 1971. 298 pp. £5 (\$13.25).

(Reviewed by John L. Sorenson, professor of Anthropology at Brigham Young University. Dr. Sorenson, who is a specialist on cultural theory, Mesoamerica, and social structure of the social sciences, has published widely in professional and Church journals.)

In his introduction, Geoffrey Ashe says "this book will have served its purpose if it defines the problems, and sug-



gests how researches which are not yet scientific may become so." This is a worthwhile aim, but it cannot be said to have been carried out adequately by the six authors of its various sections. Yet the volume has some interest for LDS readers.

Excellent scholarship is evident in Ashe's own treatment of the "Speculations of the Old World" about a dimly-known America. In open-minded but not incautious fashion he considers speculations of the Classical world (e.g., Atlantis) and of the Middle Ages (with emphasis on the St. Brendan legend). Luce covers some of the same topics from the point of view of navigation and cartography rather than legend. His discussion of Egyptian, Phoenician, Greek, and Roman voyaging and cartography are sound though brief. The caution of both Ashe and Luce (for example, Luce is not persuaded by Cyrus Gordon's claims for the Parahyba Stone from Brazil) may make the general reader somewhat impatient to get on to the more romantic speculations in some of the later articles.

Helge Ingstad's piece on "Norse Explorers" capably but succinctly sets the stage for Wallace's article surveying the evidence in Canada and the northeastern portion of the United States for Norse-derived runic inscriptions, artifacts, and sites. Little or no hard evidence is found, except for the Ingstads' material from *L'Anse aux Meadows* in northern Newfoundland, which is discussed in the last of the three articles on the Norse. Many Mormons could learn a valuable lesson in caution about the definition of a problem and the interpretation of evidence relating to its solution by a careful reading of these three articles. Ingstad argues his case for considering the northern tip of Newfoundland as the Vinland of the Norse sagas, yet indicates at least some of the reasons why not all scholars accept this view.

Heyerdahl's two contributions are much less substantial. His "Isolationist or Diffusionist?" discussion is framed in terms which ignore the development of thought on cultural processes which has gone on in the relevant disciplines in the past generation. His second article, "The Bearded Gods Speak," is a brief rehash of some points made in his popular books. If anyone has failed to appreciate Heyerdahl's one significant contribution to science, the demonstration that simple technology was no bar to ocean crossing, they will pick it up there, but the melange of cultural comparisons



and speculations add nothing of substance, as Ashe almost admits in his conclusion (pp. 274-278).

Betty Meggers's treatment of Asiatic influences on the major American cultures of early times is disappointing, perhaps because of its brevity. Had she treated the *Valdivia* (Ecuador) and *Jomon* (Japan) ceramic similarities more carefully, while attempting to meet some of the cogent objections which archaeologists have raised about her comparison, the paper would have rested on sounder ground. The few artistic and architectural motifs she adduces in favor of contacts between Mesoamerica and East Asia are not set in context sufficiently to persuade many culture specialists of their significance.

The Mormon position is referred to twice. Ashe's introduction alludes briefly to Joseph Smith and the Book of Mormon but begs off fuller consideration since "the nature of the prophet's experience is outside our present scope." Then Heyerdahl observes in passing that "religious sects," including the Mormons, have made "mystical claims" which have not furthered "the Diffusionist cause."

If this book can be seen by LDS readers, as Ashe intended it, as an opening up of the problem of "the quest for America" for scientific examination, they will profit from reading it. Unfortunately the predispositions of most such readers, reinforced by the manner in which parts of the volume are written and illustrated, is likely to lead them to conclude that the issues are all settled. The book is so handsome that it is too bad it proves to have little enduring value.

SAMUEL W. TAYLOR. *Nightfall at Nauvoo*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1971. 403 pp. \$8.95.

(Reviewed by Neal E. Lambert, associate professor of English at Brigham Young University. Dr. Lambert has published articles on Mormons and Western literature in *BYU Studies*, *Utah Historical Quarterly*, *South Dakota Review*, *Western American Literature*, and *American West*.)

In this latest of several books based on the Mormon experience, Samuel Taylor has perhaps aspired higher than in any of his previous efforts. His purpose is to tell the unique