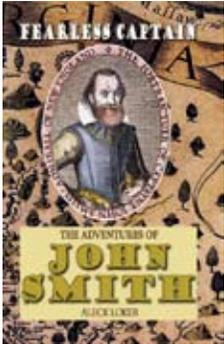


Founders of the Republic



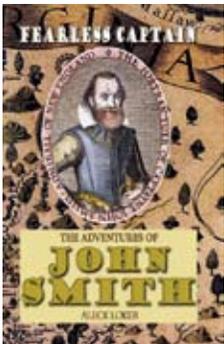
VOYA

August 2006

4Q . 2P . M . J . S

Loker, Aleck. *Fearless Captain: The Adventures of John Smith*. Morgan Reynolds, 2006. 176p. PLB \$26.95. 1-931798-83-4. Index. Illus. Maps. Biblio. Source Notes.

This biography of this English explorer, perhaps the person most responsible for establishing firm foothold by the British in Virginia, is both fascinating and illuminating. Born in 1580 to a yeoman farmer and his wife in Lincolnshire, England, Smith was endowed with an active imagination. His thirst for adventure was fueled by tales of heroic deeds of seafarers such as Sir Francis Drake, Sir Walter Raleigh, and others. At the age of thirteen, the young man sold his school satchel and books, planning to go to sea. His father discovered his plan and put an end to it. In 1596, after his father's death, Smith, now sixteen, took a small part of his inheritance and set off for London. After traveling to France, he enlisted in the army of an English captain and mastered the skills of armed combat and horsemanship. He crisscrossed Europe, engaging in battles for the Holy Roman Empire against the Turks. In 1603, Smith became involved in planning an expedition to the Virginia colony, traveling on the *Susan Constant*, which landed on the Chesapeake Bay in April 1607. Later captured by Powhatan warriors and on the verge of being clubbed to death, he was spared by the compassionate intervention of Powhatan's eleven-year-old daughter, Pocahontas. Subsequently Smith made several exploratory voyages along the Chesapeake Bay and drafted many accurate maps of the area before returning to England, where he died at the age of fifty-one. American history buffs will be enthralled by the amazing life and deeds of this intrepid adventurer whose valor, sagacity, and vision anchored the early English settlement in the New World. —Delia Culberson.



School Library Journal

April 2006

LOKER, Aleck. *Fearless Captain: The Adventures of John Smith*. 176p. maps. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2006. PLB \$26.95. ISBN 1-931798-83-4. LC 2005032442.

Gr 8-10—Loker uses recent scholarship and Smith's own writings to create a portrait of this legendary figure. He opens with the famous scene in which Pocahontas saved Smith, and then traces the man's life, beginning with his childhood thirst for adventure, devoting almost half of the book to recounting his extensive travels in Eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. The remainder of the book summarizes Britain's explorations in the New World and looks at Smith's experiences in Jamestown, concluding that his actions and leadership "provided the bond" that held the struggling colony together. Loker is generally admiring of Smith, stressing his bravery and skills, but also describing his flaws. Illustrations include color reproductions of period art and maps and contemporary maps of Smith's journeys. This is an adequate examination of the man and his legacy, but it is not as well written as Kieran Doherty's *To Conquer Is to Live: The Life of Captain John Smith of Jamestown* (21st Century Bks, 2001), which uses many of the same sources, provides more historical context, and is more focused on Smith's experiences in Virginia.—Mary Mueller, Rolla Junior High School, MO



School Library Journal

April 2006

BRAGER, Bruce L. *John Paul Jones: America's Sailor*. 160p. maps. reprints. bibliog. chron. index. notes. Web sites. CIP. Morgan Reynolds. 2006. PLB \$26.95. ISBN 1-931798-84-2. LC 2005030443.

Gr 7-10—Jones is presented here as a "tragically flawed" man who nonetheless possessed an instinctive understanding of naval tactics and the importance of naval power to the newly independent United States. Brager begins with Jones's Scottish childhood, where he developed a bitter resentment of the British class system. He then traces the man's career as a commercial seaman, privateer, naval commander, and soldier of fortune. He is brutally honest about Jones's flaws and unceasing

quest for fame and importance, describing his many misadventures and troubled relations with his crews and superiors. However, he also describes the man's unquestionable bravery and the military acumen that made him a naval hero. The text is well documented, and the author draws on both primary sources and recent scholarship. Colorful maps and reproductions of period art appear throughout. This often-unflattering portrait of Jones will require readers who can place his good and bad traits in perspective and judge his place in history, making it a good choice for mature students.- Mary Mueller, Rolla Junior High School, MO



The Horn Book Guide

Fall 2006

Brager, Bruce L. *John Paul Jones: America's Sailor*. 160 pp. Morgan Reynolds. ISBN 1-931798-84-2 **Founders of the Republic** series.

This biography recounts the story of a Revolutionary War naval hero. The book documents Admiral Jones's colorful and controversial life, including his naval warfare accomplishments and victories. History of the period is interwoven throughout the book. Archival photos, drawings, and maps illuminate the well-written text. Timeline, websites. Bib., ind. LBC