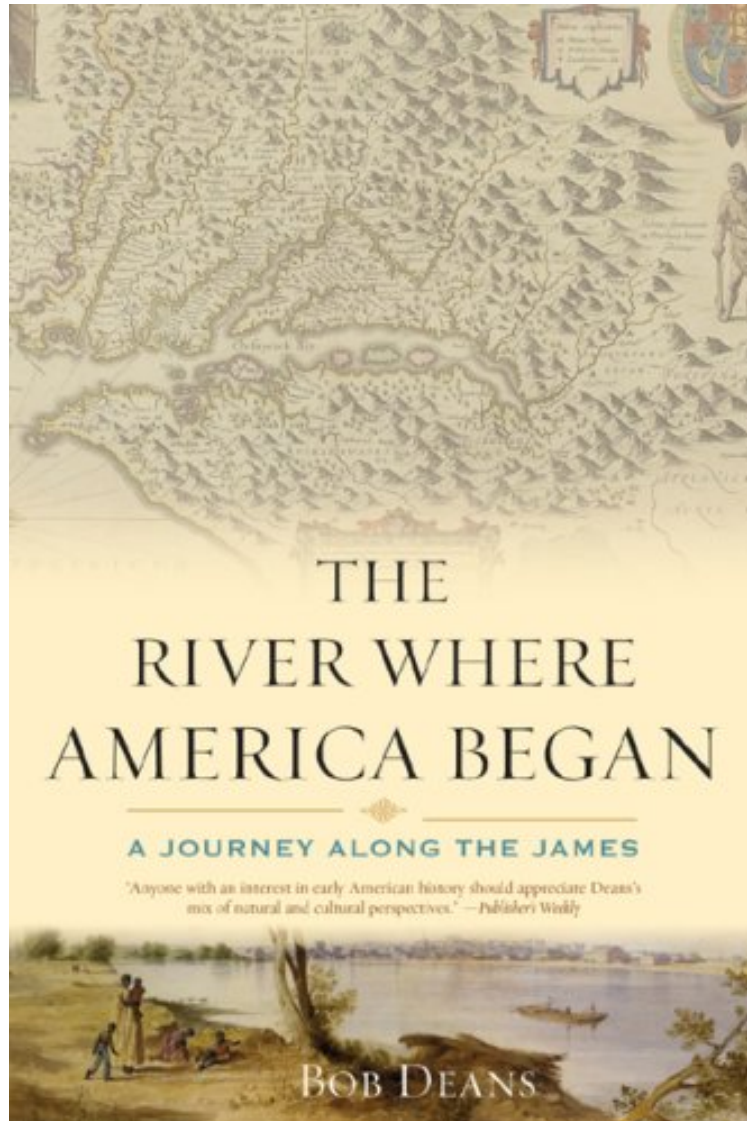


The River Where America Began: A Journey Along the James

Bob Deans

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Bob Deans : The River Where America Began: A Journey Along the James before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The River Where America Began: A Journey Along the James:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Great book, read through it twice! By paddlnAwesome book. I had just completed the kindle version as I was finishing out paddling the entire length of the James River by canoe and kayak. I was able to relate the places mentioned in the book as I completed my own journey. 0 of 0 people found the

following review helpful. great read from JamestownBy Joe Eleshukgreat read from Jamestowne. went their this summer. Wanted a bigger over view of what was going on when Jamestowne was first settled.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Pay Attention! Book is not what title suggestsBy Vail RyanGreat!, I thought, a history of the James!It is more a history of Virginia through the Civil War. As that it is adequate. Yes, some of the writing in the early chapters read like somebody got a new thesaurus for Christmas and lacks writing discipline.He spends a good deal of time talking about slavery, but how could he not?All in all, he is of the historical status quo, and there are no great insights here.

From the establishment of the first permanent English colony at Jamestown in 1607 to the fall of Richmond in 1865, the James River has been instrumental in the formation of modern America. It was along the James that British and Native American cultures collided and, in a twisted paradox, the seeds of democracy and slavery were sown side by side. The culture crafted by Virginia's learned aristocrats, merchants, farmers, and frontiersmen gave voice to the cause of the American Revolution and provided a vision for the fledgling independent nation's future. Over the course of the United States' first century, the James River bore witness to the irreconcilable contradiction of a slave-holding nation dedicated to liberty and equality for all. When that intractable conflict ignited civil war, the James River served as a critical backdrop for the bloodiest conflict in U.S. history. As he guides readers through this exciting historical narrative, Deans gives life to a dynamic cast of characters including the familiar Powhatan, John Smith, Patrick Henry, Thomas Jefferson, Benedict Arnold, and Robert E. Lee, as well as those who have largely escaped historical notoriety. *The River Where America Began* takes readers on a journey along the James River from the earliest days of civilization nearly 15,000 years ago through the troubled English settlement at Jamestown and finishes with Lincoln's tour of the defeated capital of Richmond in 1865. Deans traces the historical course of a river whose contributions to American life are both immeasurable and unique. This innovative history invites us all to look into these restless waters in a way that connects us to our past and reminds us of who we are as Americans.

From Publishers WeeklyDeans begins his absorbing history of life along the James River 15,000 years ago with Paleolithic hunter-gathers, and ends with President Abraham Lincoln taking Jefferson Davis's chair in the Confederate White House. In between, Deans demonstrates how the 340-mile river, stretching through the heart of Virginia, served as the headwaters of American history. The first two-thirds is a richly detailed history of people and events, including the founding of Jamestown in 1607. Deans vividly describes the story of Pocahontas and John Smith, the famines and Indian wars from which only one in six colonists survived, the landing of the first slaves in 1619, the emergence of the planter aristocracy and Virginia's role in leading Americans to independence. This book also details the remarkable 1775 meeting of the Virginia House of Burgesses in Richmond, which was led by the pen (Thomas Jefferson), the sword (George Washington) and the tongue (Patrick Henry) of the Revolution. Anyone with an interest in early American history should appreciate Deans's mix of natural and cultural perspectives. Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.From BooklistA consciously populist history of Virginia's settlement and growth up to 1865, this narrative is crowded with personalities and flavored with idiosyncratic opinions. Whatever seriousness Deans, an experienced journalist, sacrifices by imagining how Chief Powhatan might have taken advantage of cable news television, he makes inroads on readers who regard history as old and irrelevant. He inducts them into the Jamestown saga beginning in 1607, introduces them to historical questions (Did Pocahontas save John Smith's life or did Smith invent the story?), and chronologically concludes with Abraham Lincoln's 1865 journey up the James River to the incinerated capital of the confederacy. The signal events of the intervening period, such as the 1622 Indian attack on Jamestown, Bacon's rebellion of 1676, and the American Revolution, are recounted against the background of the James River's geography and, most saliently, slavery. Deans' interlineal commentary reflects the zeitgeist's critical stance toward America's origin story, while his fast-moving presentation successfully engages interest in an overview of Jamestown and its aftermath. Gilbert TaylorCopyright American Library Association. All rights reserved The James is America's river. It witnessed the birth of English-speaking America in 1607 and the 'new birth of freedom' ushered in by Union victory in the Civil War and Abraham Lincoln's dramatic visit to the fallen Confederate capital of Richmond on April 4, 1865. Bob Deans' eloquent narrative does full justice to the story both tragic and majestic of this historic river. (James M. McPherson, Princeton University)A beautifully written, brilliant book, *The River Where America Began* is history the way it should be told. An inspiring story of America and its unique struggle to become a great nation. (Helen Thomas, Dean, White House Press Corps, Hearst Columnist)The James River was America's first waterway and may still be its most historic. With the eye of a fine journalist and the heart of a native Virginian, Bob Deans has made an engaging human drama of the great river's history, from Pocahontas and John Smith to Jefferson Davis and Abraham Lincoln. It's a compelling read. (Doyle McManus, Washington Bureau Chief, Los Angeles Times)A waterway that runs through Virginia also runs throughand nourishesour identity as a nation. This book is the work of a superb journalist, and also a masterful storyteller. In Bob Deans' unsparing and riveting narrative, we really get to know characters like Captain John Smith and Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry, and understand why we wouldn't be who we are if they hadn't been who they

were. (Time Magazine)Deans has written an account of our history that is at once lively, surprising and deeply insightful, a powerful book that reveals much about who Americans are and where we came from. (New Orleans Times-Picayune)Deans roves far beyond Jamestown's first couple of decades. . . . His succession of stories brims with drama and vignettes of famous and not-so-famous people. Local Virginia collections may be interested in Deans' work. (Library Journal)Anyone with an interest in early American history should appreciate Deans's mix of natural and cultural perspectives. (Publishers Weekly)Deans' interlineal commentary reflects the zeitgeist's critical stance toward America's origin story, while his fast-moving presentation successfully engages interest in an overview of Jamestown and its aftermath. (Booklist)The genuine attempt to include native sources, including the views of twenty-first century natives, is laudable. For historians of the United States or of Virginia specifically, this book should be readable and entertaining. (American Studies)Heartfelt and engaging. . . . Persons rooted in or who live near the shores of the Hudson and James Rivers will treasure this volume. (Journal Of The American Republic)