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Cressman: *Prehistory of the Far West: Homes of Vanished Peoples*

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Prehistory of the Far West: Homes of Vanished Peoples. L.S. Cressman. Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1977. 248 pp., 40 figs., 6 maps, 11 tables. \$15.00.

Reviewed by R.F. HEIZER
University of California, Berkeley

Luther Cressman comes as near to being the grand-daddy of far western archaeology as any living man. He and his students have been actively involved with Oregon prehistory for the last 45 years, and their contribution is an impressively substantial one. Now, from this experienced and objective scholar we have a synthesis of the prehistory of western North America which begins by summarizing the complexities of environmental changes over time back into the Pleistocene and proceeds to the chronologies of these alterations in the several natural areas involved, a review of the proposals for very ancient human presence (most of them bearing a burden of doubt), a summary of the anthropometry and linguistics of the area, a stimulating discussion of subsistence means and related activities, and a historical sketch of archaeological studies (pp. 129 ff). On the whole, I think this is an unusually sound and thorough work and that it will be an important guide, especially for younger scholars who come into archaeology and are confronted face-to-face with the mountains of literature of variable quality. An authoritative and balanced survey of this sort can be at the same time innovative, corrective, informative, and directive.

Having said that, I list a few matters which bothered me. The chapters are only titled, and numbers would be useful. The chapter "The Wanderers" includes a discussion of ancient human occupation at Texas Street and Santa Rosa Island which the book's author is inclined to accept. I disagree with him on the grounds that the evidence available is very poor. Valsequillo he calls "valid and firmly

dated," but the main issue of artifact planting raised by José Lorenzo is not mentioned. Calico Hills is not discussed, though it scarcely deserves it.

The treatment of the atlatl-bow succession is over-brief (pp. 106-107), and since Cressman can speak with knowledge on this matter its omission is a disappointment.

The book must have been in its final writing stage about 1969 since this is the terminal date for all but a few references. It is a pity that a postscript chapter, however brief, was not added to bring the reader up to date on publication of important work reported in the interim. I would include here such items as L.K. Napton's archaeology and coprolite analysis from Lovelock Cave, Baumhoff's and my examination of the evidence for "big game hunters" in the Great Basin, T.R. Hester's review of Great Basin culture chronology, the numerous articles on projectile point sequences in the Great Basin, and the publications of the Nevada State Museum and University of Nevada's Desert Research Institute. I hope that Cressman, or one of his Oregon colleagues will do this if the book is reprinted—a probability, I think.



The Expedition of Capt. J.W. Davidson from Fort Tejon to Owens Valley in 1859. Philip J. Wilke and Harry W. Lawton, eds. Socorro, New Mexico: Ballena Press Publications in Archaeology, Ethnology, and History No. 8. 1976. 55 pp., 11 illustrations. \$4.95 (paper).

Reviewed by JAMES F. O'CONNELL
Australian National University

In the summer of 1859, a reinforced company of U.S. Dragoons under the command of Black Jack Davidson rode northeast