

people and events that had little relation to Lincoln were given too much space. There was too much quoting of sources, some of which were unreliable and some of which were not worth reproducing—a catalogue of quotes one critic complained. Because Sandburg did not employ footnotes, it was difficult to identify or check many of his sources. There was little probing for causes or assaying of movements. And some of the detail was inaccurate.

In justice to Sandburg, it should be noted that some of his criticized techniques were deliberate on his part and can be defended. On the issue of length, it can be argued that his massive stage—a nation—and his massive cast—a people—required a massive presentation. As to the lack of analysis, Sandburg believes that neatly wrapped up explanations of complex periods can be misleading. In his words, the historian of the Civil War needs “a gift for showing chaos . . . and a weave of paradox leading to the future.”

WHILE the present volume is primarily a boiled-down version of the previous six, it is more. The years since Sandburg's biography appeared have witnessed the publication of many important works dealing with Lincoln and his times; Sandburg refers to the last thirty years as ones of “fiercely intensive” research. He has examined these books and utilized their findings, not so much in the direction of incorporating new material as in modifying and balancing his earlier judgments. As example, the Ann Rutledge legend, which he accepted in the “Prairie Years,” is treated here with perception and restraint. He has corrected most, although not all, of the factual errors in the six volumes. He has eliminated the pointless anecdotes and the peripheral material that slowed the pace of the antecedent work.

The result is, in my opinion, a biography that as a whole is superior to the longer life. This one volume has a form which the six lacked. It is a tighter and a tidier book. It retains the superb qualities of the original work without the faults of the latter.

Historical research sometimes moves in a mysterious way its wonders to perform. For long periods no work will appear on a particular individual or episode. Then suddenly and with no apparent reason there will be a rush of books on the subject. In the last thirty years no satisfactory one-volume life of Lincoln was published. In 1952 came Benjamin P. Thomas's biography. Now we have Mr. Sandburg's. They are both good books, and it is good to have both of them.

Covering the Union Front



Louis M. Starr—“original, arresting.”

“Bohemian Brigade,” by Louis M. Starr (Alfred A. Knopf, 367 pp. \$5), tells how the newspapers covered the American Civil War. William Harlan Hale, who reviews it here, is the author of *“Horace Greeley: Voice of the People.”*

By William Harlan Hale

ONE would have thought that almost everything that could be said about what the Civil War was like or was not like had already been said; but here comes Louis M. Starr, a newspaperman and thoroughly informed war-buff, with fresh information on the subject of how the conflict in the field was reported to hungry readers in the North, and of this material he has made an original and arresting book.

With great engines of public opinion such as Horace Greeley's *Tribune*, Bennett's *New York Herald*, and Henry Raymond's rising *New York Times* clamoring for every scrap of battle news, and with mass-circulation revenues and the new telegraph providing the funds and the facilities for getting it fast, the Civil War was the first in history to be given sustained and detailed first-hand coverage. But the labor of getting this news was not what it is in our own day. The war correspondent, when the Union armies took to the field, was not a VIP to be accorded high-level briefings, press camps, Army

vehicles, rations, sergeant attendants, and Army liquor, but a camp-follower on the level with sutlers, an “unauthorized hanger-on,” a “damned newspaper mongrel,” as General Sherman called him, left to shift for himself at best by a command which looked on his tribe as drunken tramps—which some of them were—and at the worst arrested, drummed out of camp, and banished if something he had written seemed to compromise the commanding general.

Imagine a World War II without a luxurious Hotel Scribe in Paris reserved entirely for American correspondents, and without a hundred jeeps set aside for them; without a SHAEF Public Relations Division headed by a brigadier general surrounded by platoons of field-grade officers offering mimeographed handouts and wire circuits; without even a daily war communique from General MacArthur's headquarters. Imagine General Bradley, say, court-martialing a correspondent on charges of espionage because of a presumed “leak” in the copy he had filed (which is what General Sherman did); or General “Howlin’ Mad” Smith jailing a *Tribune* man for criticizing his battle tactics (as General “Fighting Joe” Hooker did after Chancellorsville); or Secretary of War Stimson issuing peremptory orders forbidding any reporter to accompany the armies (as Secretary Stanton did). You then have a picture of what it was like to cover the Civil War. The war, as the Prussian observer Count Zepelin said, may have constituted “a military revolution,” but the revolution in its press relationships had to be won by its reporters, unaided except by brashness, stratagem, and judiciously-placed whiskey on teetotaling “Uncle Horace's” expense account.

THIS revolution was accompanied and aided by another in the newspaper world itself—a point Starr underscores. The low estate of the reporter of 1861 had been the result, largely, of the low calibre of reporting before then, when opinionated bombast and rhetoric often substituted for presentation of fact and left outsiders thinking that a reporter was a mere hack writing to the order of his editor's politics—an assumption made explosive in a political war. Horace Greeley himself, whose greatness had

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High Adventure

"The Age of Mountaineering," by James Ramsey Ullman (J. B. Lippincott, 352 pp. \$6), is a compendium of accounts of the conquest of the principal mountains of the world and of useful data about the science of mountaineering. William O. Douglas, associate justice of the Supreme Court, who reviews it here, is himself a mountaineer of note.

By William O. Douglas

JAMES RAMSEY ULLMAN is the foremost American authority on mountaineering, best known perhaps for his mountaineering novel, "The White Tower." His new book, "The Age of Mountaineering," is a beautiful narrative of the conquests of mountains that is as exciting as fiction. It includes the Alps, the Caucasus, the Atlas, the Andes, the Himalayas, the Rockies, the Sierra, and the Cascades. It also covers three famous peaks in central Africa, McKinley in Alaska, and one peak in the Pamirs of Russia. The main emphasis of the book is on the major historic climbs in the Alps, Andes, and Himalayas and in Africa and Alaska. This book, covering some of the same ground as Ullman's earlier volume, "High Conquest," is the best compendium of mountaineering available in the English language.

The author begins with recorded history and brings the account down through the successful British conquest of Everest and the American unsuccessful assault on K-2—both in 1953. (The 1954 conquest of K-2 by Desio and his Italian team is not included, for the book was on the presses by that time.) The book has much in it that relates to the art and science of climbing rocks, glaciers, and snow fields. But those aspects are incidental. The meat of the book is a description of famous climbs, many that were successful, many that ended in disaster and defeat.

Mountaineering has had as much of a frontier as engineering, science, law, and industrial management. During most of recorded history mountains have been associated with fears and superstitions. The first significant mountain conquest came in 1786, when Mt. Blanc was climbed. Mountaineering then became a new form

of adventure. It evolved into an art and a science in the middle of the last century, largely under the leadership of the British. As knowledge of high altitudes increased, new equipment was designed. Information concerning weather, snow conditions, and avalanches accumulated. The use of the back and shoulders in climbing was developed. The literature on mountaineering became rich and diversified. Every expedition enriched the public knowledge. Climbing a major peak became a project almost as vast and complicated as the preparation for retaking an island in the Pacific during World War II.

Today, there is no nation that can lay first claim to mastery of the science and the art of mountaineering. Many nations share the honors. The British are of course pre-eminent. But so are the Germans, the French, the Italians, the Swiss, and the Americans. Each has added to the sum of knowledge on the subject. The British, of course, wrote glorious history on Everest. But so did the Germans on Nanga Parbat, the French on Annapurna, the Italians on K-2. To date the Swiss and the Americans have been denied victory along the highest range of the world. They have had victory within reach, only to lose it by the happenstance of weather. Yet their defeats added to the total of knowledge that helped assure the successes of those who followed.

EACH of the accounts in this volume is dramatically told. Each is a novel in miniature, filled with tenseness, dark tragedy, exaltation.

There are six appendices that cover Women in Mountaineering. The Himalayan Career of the great Tenzing, A Note on Volcanos, data on One Hundred Famous Mountains, a Glossary of Mountaineering Terms, and a Reading List of mountain literature. There are, in addition, twenty-four superb black-and-white pictures of the most famous peaks and famous expeditions, and six maps as well.

The writing is in an easy flowing style. Ullman puts the grandeur, the severity, the terror of mountains into beautiful English. There is the roar of avalanches in his sentences—and also the majesty and severity of the high peaks on a calm day.



—From "Nanga Parbat."

A climber in the Rakhiot Glacier region uses a fixed rope to help himself over a difficult, but beautiful, serac.



—From "Our Everest Adventure."

Home-made goggles were made of tape and celluloid and worn by Khumbu women who helped expedition which climbed Everest.



—From "The Age of Mountaineering."

This man strains to reach the tip of a treacherous rock pinnacle in the Swiss Alps during a particularly arduous climb.