

hundred pages for more narrative and portraiture. But he has admirably achieved what he set out to accomplish, and has given us a history which, if never moving or exciting, is thoughtful, learned, accurate, and complete.

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The Man Behind Roosevelt: The Story of Louis McHenry Howe. By Lela Stiles. (Cleveland: The World Publishing Company, 1954, pp. x, 311. Illustrations and index. \$4.75.)

In 1928, Miss Lela Stiles, a very young newspaper woman from Kentucky, came to New York City in search of material for her column. Finding the atmosphere of the Democratic National Committee congenial, she took a job there, under the direction of Louis McHenry Howe, and fell under his spell. She shared also her mentor's unbounded devotion to Franklin D. Roosevelt, at that time candidate for Governor of New York on the Democratic ticket. Except for one or two brief interludes, Miss Stiles was to remain with Howe until his death and with the Democratic party, in one capacity or another, until the present day.

No one will deny that Miss Stiles has had unparalleled opportunities to observe Louis Howe in action, and through his eyes, Franklin D. Roosevelt. There is nothing particularly new about Roosevelt in this book. Since no man has been written about so extensively this is not to be wondered at. But it comes as something of a surprise to one who saw Louis Howe in his role of personal manager to Roosevelt, that he ever was a little boy, or even that he had a wife and children. That he came of Yankee stock was, I believe, taken for granted: but this reviewer was surprised to learn that he was born a Hoosier—even though one of our most cherished traditions is that men who excel in politics are born somewhere in the vicinity of the Wabash. A delicate child, young Louis was not to remain long in Indiana. At the age of seven his parents moved to Saratoga Springs, New York. In this fashionable, exciting atmosphere the young Louis grew to manhood.

In the Gay Nineties and the early 1900's, Saratoga was the mecca for the idle rich who came to "take the waters."

Somewhat later it came to be the resort for horsemen, speculators and politicians. As a child young Louis Howe was associated with his father in the newspaper business. Before long, the frail and studious young man earned fame as a reviewer of books and as a political reporter. In the winter of 1907, he was assigned to Albany by the *New York Herald* to serve as correspondent for its evening counterpart, the *New York Telegram*.

In Albany, Howe's first hero was Governor Charles Evans Hughes who was waging a vigorous and successful battle against the corporation lobbyists. This young man not only had a penchant for siding with those who were destined to enjoy fame as champions of the people, but he also had a nose for news and was soon recognized as one of the most ingenious and resourceful reporters in New York state. When he learned in 1910 that Dutchess County, the private fief of Lou Payne, one of Thomas C. Platt's lieutenants, had sent a Democrat named Roosevelt to the senate, he pricked up his ears. Though a Democrat, Louis Howe, like his father, was an admirer of Teddy and he wondered if the new Roosevelt would carry on the tradition that had made the name of Roosevelt a name to conjure with in progressive households throughout the nation.

Everyone knows how Franklin D. Roosevelt led a little group of insurgents and forced the withdrawal of "Blue-eyed Billy" Sheehan, Charles F. Murphy's hand-picked candidate for the United States Senate—and thereby earned the enmity of the organization and the love of the independents. Faithfully reporting the events, Louis Howe finally was directed to interview Roosevelt. It was during this meeting that Louis Howe made his decision that the young senator should be President of the United States.

The rest of the book is a chronicle of the association between Roosevelt and Howe. From this time forward the two were inseparable. Howe followed Roosevelt to Washington when the latter was chosen Assistant Secretary of the Navy. Skillful, shrewd and utterly devoted to his leader, Howe superintended Roosevelt's every move, watched his mail, screened his callers, and conducted private campaigns by letter and by news story to keep his hero in the spotlight. When the Squire of Hyde Park was stricken with infantile

paralysis it was Howe who stepped in as nurse, valet, counselor and friend. Indefatigably he strove to maintain morale in the Roosevelt household, and when Franklin's spirits were low, he buoyed him up with activity and hope.

Historians will quarrel over the role played by Howe in guiding Roosevelt through the 1924 convention, when the latter nominated Al Smith in a ringing speech which helped to heal the breach with Tammany. Also, there will not be complete agreement over the significance of Howe's advice in Roosevelt's decision to run for Governor in 1928. That Howe bent every effort to achieve Roosevelt's success in the Empire State, which Smith lost, is probably accepted. The Governor himself undoubtedly charted the course which kept the majority of the Democrats appeased even when he belatedly stiffened in his attitude toward Mayor James Walker, who had tried the patience of the independent Democrats in the city beyond endurance.

Certainly Franklin Roosevelt could not have won the nomination in 1932 without James A. Farley's help and he could not have won the election if the depression had not faced Hoover with more problems than he could solve. Miss Stiles does not exaggerate Howe's service to the President during the hundred days when Roosevelt was tackling the problems of recovery and relief. Nor does she attach undue importance to the contributions which Louis Howe made to the "reform" movement known as the New Deal. But she faithfully portrays Louis Howe as the faithful, selfless guardian of the master's private life, the political bureaucrat and tactician, the friendly antagonist who restrained the erratic and sometimes perilously close to disastrous impulses which were characteristic of Roosevelt. After Howe's death, no other man ever attained to the position of intimacy which he enjoyed with Roosevelt for twenty-six years. Of course, Roosevelt went on to win the 1936 election in a landslide, and twice more was to capture the nomination and win the election. Although Louis Howe had slept away, he had left his friend with a keener sense of responsibility and a vital faith in his destiny which survived the passing of the gnomelike little man from Saratoga.

This is not a tale told by a psychologist. But in this faithful chronicle of events we see how necessary to the Great Man, the Leader, is the loyal, inspired and unambitious

comrade. That such a man as Howe happened along when he could be of most help to the future President is one of the accidents of history. It is not enough to say that a leader of Roosevelt's "type" attracts such lieutenants. The lieutenant has to be there to be attracted.

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Secretary Stimson: A Study in Statecraft. By Richard N. Current. (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1954, pp. viii, 272. Bibliography and index. \$4.50.)

Two caveats will strike the reader of this well-written volume. The publisher's dust-cover refers to the "first assessment of a controversial career," and on page vii the author says his work is "intended more to raise questions than to give final answers, many of which are not yet available, and some of which may never be." Other assessments there will inevitably be; the author's answers are perhaps more categorical than his tentative statement just quoted might portend.

Family, training, and association prepared Henry Lewis Stimson for public service. Scion of New Yorkers just below the first-line aristocrats but still with a long tradition, he went naturally enough to Phillips-Andover, to Yale, and to the Harvard Law School, whence his connections took him into Elihu Root's law firm. Here he acquired enough of this world's goods to free him for such public duties as came his way.

These were many; calling the roll in a brief 250 pages is no mean feat of compression. Appointed to a federal district attorneyship by Theodore Roosevelt in 1906, Stimson became an enthusiastic trust-buster. As enthusiastically, but less successfully, he ran for governor of New York in 1910, finding haven as William Howard Taft's Secretary of War in 1911. World War I gave him some military experience and the rank of colonel. His real contribution to affairs began at the age of sixty with service as proconsul of waning American imperialism in Nicaragua and the Philippines. He returned from the latter to his first association with high-level policy making as Herbert Hoover's Secretary of State.