

New Allegations Against Historian

By HILLEL ITALIE
Associated Press

NEW YORK, Jan. 9—Best-selling historian Stephen Ambrose is facing still more allegations of lifting material from other sources.

Forbes.com reported today that two more books by Ambrose, "Citizen Soldiers" and Part 3 of his Richard Nixon trilogy, contain passages similar to those in other texts.

Four of his works are now under question.

The author's son and agent, Hugh Ambrose, declined to comment. Victoria Meyer, a spokeswoman for his publisher, Simon & Schuster, said any errors would be fixed.

"If there are indeed additional passages or sentences that are footnoted, but not in quotation marks when they should have been, we will work with our author to make the necessary corrections," she said.

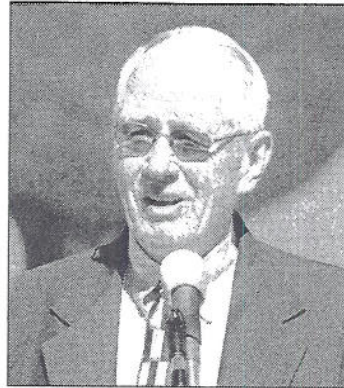
Last weekend, Ambrose acknowledged that his current bestseller, "The Wild Blue," included passages from Thomas Childers's "Wings of Morning." Ambrose footnoted Childers in the sections in question but did not acknowledge quoting directly from the book. Both books are about World War II bomber pilots.

On Tuesday, Forbes.com reported Ambrose's "Crazy Horse and Custer" included passages close to Jay Monaghan's "Custer." In today's editions of the New Orleans Times-Picayune, Ambrose said: "There are places where I used some of his words, and I should have put quote marks around them."

Ambrose was unsure if his other books had similar problems.

"I don't know. It's a lot of books," said Ambrose, author of more than 20 historical works, including "Undaunted Courage" and "Nothing Like It in the World."

In "Citizen Soldiers," a World War II book published in 1997, Am-



FILE PHOTO/BY JON EBELT—INDEPENDENT RECORD VIA AP

In parts of four books, Stephen Ambrose didn't use quotation marks when quoting other authors.

brose includes an author's note that says he "stole material profitably if shamelessly" from Joseph Balkoski's "Beyond the Beachhead," which came out in 1989. (Ambrose even wrote the foreword to the paperback edition.)

The actual text includes material, without quotation marks, that closely resembles the Balkoski book.

In "Citizen Soldiers," Ambrose writes:

"Men from the 3rd Battalion draped the body with the Stars and Stripes and hoisted it on top of a huge pile of stones that once had been a wall in the Saint Croix Church, a block from the cemetery. Howie's body remained on display through the next day, July 19. GIs and some of the few civilians remaining in the town adorned the site with flowers."

Balkoski's version:

"The next morning, the 29ers draped the body with the Stars and Stripes and hoisted it on top of a huge pile of stones that once had been a wall of Sainte Croix Church, one block west of the cemetery. The body remained on display throughout July 19. The 29ers and some of

the few civilians remaining in the city adorned the site with flowers."

Allegations of plagiarism in history books are nothing new.

Alex Haley acknowledged he had lifted material for "Roots," his 1970s bestseller. More recently, Atlantic Monthly Press canceled distribution of the biography "I Have Not Yet Begun to Fight: A Life of John Paul Jones," after author James Mackay was found to have been accused of plagiarism in Scotland.

But neither Haley nor Mackay was a professional historian like Ambrose, and notable instances of plagiarism within the field are relatively rare. Since 1993, only 14 cases have been accepted for full review by the American Historical Association.

"I don't think it's very prevalent," said Eric Foner, a professor of history at Columbia University and author of the acclaimed "Reconstruction."

Foner did say he's had students commit the same error Ambrose acknowledged: footnoting a source but failing to note a direct quotation.

"I've had to tell them that a footnote does not solve the problem of using someone else's work," Foner said.

Historians are not questioning Ambrose's integrity. They believe Ambrose might have so internalized his source material he unconsciously replicated it, or that the problem originates with his team of research assistants. Ambrose is also highly prolific, increasing the chance of error.

"I don't see anything malicious," Foner said. "I think what happens is a sloppiness which derives from speed. You kind of throw things together and you lose sight of the difference between your language and someone else's language."