

The reporter of the century has written the book of the year.

No American correspondent has been closer than Arthur Krock to the great men and dramatic events of the twentieth century. Versailles and Washington, Hyde Park and Hyannis Port—he was there. Observing. Participating.

Arthur Krock saw FDR plan a secret meeting with Hitler. He listened to Harry Truman's private confession of his "worst" blunder. And, as a close personal friend, he watched the shocking deterioration of James V. Forrestal.



Now, in his *Memoirs*, Arthur Krock shares the remarkable experiences and sharp insights that won three Pulitzer Prizes for him. He discloses for the first time what John Kennedy said privately after the Bay of Pigs. He publishes the full text of Clark Clifford's memorandum, top-secret until now, that was so influential in shaping the Marshall Plan and the Truman Doctrine. And he tells of Lyndon Johnson's efforts to be named as Adlai Stevenson's vice presidential running mate.



Without question, Arthur Krock's *Memoirs* will be quoted and discussed by informed citizens everywhere.



Memoirs
60 Years on the Firing Line
by Arthur Krock
\$10.00 at all book stores.

Sixty years with a journalistic sage

MEMOIRS: Sixty Years on the Firing Line. By Arthur Krock. Funk & Wagnalls, 508 pp. \$10.

By Vermont Royster

Arthur Krock is a man of such venerable age that he was a Washington correspondent before most of the present practitioners were born. He is also a man of such durable vigor that he was still writing in *The New York Times* about this summer's political fiestas.

He is besides a man of such Olympian dignity as to awe both his readers and his colleagues. He addresses office boys as "mister," and even a 30-year acquaintance emboldens few to call him Arthur. Every President since Woodrow Wilson has felt his darts as if they were thunderbolts. And every reader of his dispatches has reacted, whether in anger or agreement, as if to the pronouncements of Jove.

Out of so long a life Arthur Krock has previously carved one book. *In the Nation* was a compilation of his writings in *The New York Times* from the early New Deal to the birth of the Great Society.

Now out of that same life Mr. Krock has set down his reminiscences.

At the same time, having seen much of history—four wars, three peace conferences, booms and depressions, Constitutional crises and social upheavals—Mr. Krock is no man to stand silent about the present. And he confesses to a "visceral" fear, arising from what he has seen of the mismanagement of our economic affairs, the misjudgments in our foreign affairs and the misguided effects of our political and social reactions at home. That fear, he says, "is that the tenure of the United States as the first power of the world may be the briefest in history."

Yet in spite of this grim verdict, his are cheerful memoirs. Mr. Krock is here more jovial than Joveain, in style as well as content. And he has a lot to talk about. The fourth generation of mixed German-Jewish-Anglo-Saxon stock, he was born in Kentucky in 1886.

Vermont Royster is the editor of The Wall Street Journal.



Arthur Krock

His family was not affluent, and so though he matriculated at Princeton he had to finish his education at Lewis Institute in Chicago. Back in Kentucky and faced with the necessity of supporting himself, he got a newspaper job by pretending to reportorial experience he would acquire thereafter.

The "thereafter" involved a good many ups and downs, including a stint as Washington correspondent for the *Louisville Courier-Journal* and an assignment to cover the 1918-1919 peace conference in Paris. The

later, as it turned out, was just a device of the home office to get him out of the way. In the early 1920s he joined *The New York World*, of hallowed memory, where both he and it had as many downs as ups.

He escaped to *The New York Times* as an editorial writer just before the *World* fell apart, and in 1931 suspected he might again have been banished when the *Times* sent him to Washington after others had been offered the post and turned it down. At the age of forty-five he was obviously not prescient.

Inevitably, however, the next 30 years provide the major interest and excitement in these memoirs, for these embrace the years from Herbert Hoover to Lyndon Johnson.

And you don't have to agree with the Krockian judgments on people to savor their flavor.

Herbert Hoover he found "warm, witty and forceful in private" for all that he seemed cold and heavy in public. He thought F.D.R.'s virtues included a sincere devotion to uplifting the underprivileged, a quick mind, human compassion; his defects were a "lack of intellectual depth; too great a reliance . . . on what is clever and slick."

Harry Truman, he thinks, "curiously combines pettiness with greatness"; but "nearly invariably he showed complete courage in making momentous decisions and an iron backbone that kept him from ever going back on those decisions." In Eisenhower he found a man of great character, and in the end he concluded that his Administration was "one of the most notable."

His relations with the Kennedys, which he recounts at length, were charming and paradoxical. An old friend of the family, he gave early encouragement to J.F.K., but did not think him a success as President. For Lyndon Johnson he has mainly hard words, although recognizing his virtues.

Yet provocative as these judgments are, they are not uttered with the *ex cathedra* air they may seem to have here when snipped out of context. The years have taught Mr. Krock the complexity of men and life, especially the life of men in politics, so he wraps his judgments with the restraint born of understanding; a virtue not less rare among journalists than among others.