ADAMS, SAMUEL HOPKINS (Jan. 26, 1871–Nov. 15, 1958), author and journalist, was born in Dunkirk, N.Y., the son of Myron Adams, a Presbyterian minister, and Hester Rose Hopkins. His grandparents were distantly related to, but apparently not overawed by, the better-known Boston Adamses. He attended the Free Academy in Rochester, N.Y., and spent one semester at Union College, but received the B.A. in 1891 from Hamilton College in Clinton, N.Y.

Upon graduation Adams joined the *New York Sun* as a reporter and special writer, one of a generation of "gentleman journalists"—Arthur Bisbane, Jacob Riis, Richard Harding Davis, Will Irwin, and David Graham Phillips—who were trained on that paper in the exacting tradition of its editor Charles A. Dana. On Oct. 19, 1898, Adams married Elizabeth Remson Noyes; they had two children. That marriage ended in divorce in 1909, and on Apr. 11, 1915, Adams married former stage actress Jane Peyton Van Norman Post.

In 1900 Adams was hired by S. S. McClure for *McClure's Magazine.* He was a staff member from 1903 to 1905, when the muckraking movement was at its height. Adams quickly made his own mark with a series of articles for *Collier's Weekly* on patent medicine and medical quackery; together with such men as Harvey Wiley and Upton Sinclair he was credited with having inspired the passage by Congress of the Pure Food and Drug Act. For his exposé work he was made a lay associate member of the American Medical Association in 1913.

The A.M.A. also sponsored the publication of the *Collier's* articles as Adams' first book, *The Great American Fraud* (1906). Thereafter, except for a brief stint as editor of *Ridgeway's Weekly* (1910), Adams was a free-lance writer, producing some fifty books and numerous articles and short stories in the course of his career. His was a satisfying professional life, permitting "freedom of thought, action, and mode of existence," he wrote in 1942, "and in this era when individual choice, threatened as it is throughout an imperiled world, has never been so precious."

Few of Adams' works won lasting critical acclaim but almost all were commercially successful. He wrote mystery stories, historical romances, and novels about crusading newspapermen (*The Clarion,* 1914). Under the pseudonym Warner Fabian he wrote the novel *Flaming Youth* (1923), whose title was quickly adopted as one of the labels for the 1920's. In 1926 he wrote *Revelry,* a melodramatic fictionalized account of Warren Harding's presidency; the book was condemned by several state legislatures, and banned in Philadelphia and Washington, D.C.—in the meantime selling 100,000 copies. Seventeen of Adams' novels and stories became motion pictures; in addition to *Flaming Youth,* these included *The Gorgeous Hussy,* starring Joan Crawford, for which he wrote the screenplay (1936); *It Happened One Night,* with Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable (based on his short story "Night Bus," 1934); and *The Harvey Girls* (1942).

Adams ventured into nonfiction with *The Godlike Daniel* (1930), a colorful but unreliable biography of Daniel Webster, and *Incredible Era* (1939), an account of the Harding administration. In the absence of Harding's presidential papers—then inaccessible—such a book necessarily had to be largely a matter of hearsay and conjecture, as the author acknowledged in his introduction. Nevertheless, it was accepted for many years as "indisputably the best book on Warren Harding and his administration." Historians have been less kind to *Incredible Era* than have literary people; Frederick L. Paxson attacked the book in the *American Historical Review* (1940), and Robert K. Murray, whose own research profited from the opening to scholars of the Harding Papers in 1964, stated that the Adams book had "all the trappings of scholarship but little of the substance." Murray recognized, however, that Adams and other writers on Harding who had personally lived through that era were of necessity influenced by its climate of opinion: "They reported history as they saw and lived it."

In his later years Adams turned again to biography (*Alexander Woollcott: His Life and His World,* 1945), to juvenile historical fiction (*The Pony Express, The Santa Fe Trail, The Erie Canal*), and to family reminiscence, in a delightful series of *New Yorker* essays published as *Grandfather Stories* (1955). He remained active as a writer to the end of his long life but was reported to have said, "I'm damned if I want my last novel to appear posthumously." *Tenderloin,* a novel of turn-of-the-century Manhattan drawn from his observations in the 1890's as a reporter for the *Sun,* was in press when he died. It was promptly turned into a Broadway musical. Adams died in Beaufort, S.C.

[Adams' papers, including correspondence and typescripts, are located at Syracuse University and Hamilton College. See also Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, eds., *Twentieth Century Authors* (1942) and *First Supplement* (1955); and the obituary notice in the *New York Times,* Nov. 17, 1958. For literary assessments of Adams' work, see Robert K. Murray, *The Harding Era: Warren G. Harding and His Administration* (1969); and Serrell Hillman, "Samuel Hopkins Adams: 1871–1958," *Saturday Review,* Dec. 20, 1958.]

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