



Life of Roger Brooke Taney: Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court (Classic Reprint)

Bernard Christian Steiner

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Excerpt from Life of Roger Brooke Taney: Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court

The presence of four men in Maryland secured in that State the success of the sympathizers with the Union in 1861. Three of these men were politicians and lawyers: John Pendleton Kennedy, Reverdy Johnson, and Henry Winter Davis. The fourth was a jurist - Roger Brooke Taney. The life of Kennedy was written by Tuckerman and needs not to be written again. Those of Johnson and Davis it has been the privilege of the author of this work to write. The life of Taney has been written by Samuel Tyler and was published in 1872. That portly volume is invaluable to every student of Taney's life, both because the author was a friend of the chief justice and gathered information which would otherwise have been lost and because the book contains a very valuable autobiography of Taney's early years. Yet the book was styled by a contemporary reviewer, as a "panegyric rather than a biography," was written uncritically, is nearly fifty years old, did not include the information now to be gained from Taney's correspondence with President Jackson, and involved no full discussion of the subject's place as a jurist. For these reasons, it seemed worth while to have this book written - the life of a Border State Federalist, written by one who was brought up in the town where Taney practiced law for nearly a quarter of a century, and who has lived for the whole of his adult life in the city which was Taney's residence during his judicial career.

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