

ROGER B. TANEY

Roger Brooke Taney was a shy man, but warm and outgoing, a devoted friend, well liked, brilliant but happy in a simple and intimate family circle, inflexible in his sense of right and duty.

One of his best friends in early political days, was Francis Scott Key. Taney married Key's sister, Anne, and shortly thereafter set up a law practice in Baltimore, Maryland. Taney's reputation soon ranked with the greatest: Luther Martin, Robert Harper, and William Wirt. Respected, admired, successful beyond every expectation, his fondest hope was realized when he became Attorney General of the State of Maryland.

Under Jackson's reign, Taney was appointed Attorney General of the United States and stepped into a battle more lethal than any that had yet divided the young country. Taney next served as Secretary of the Treasury for one term then, on January 15, 1835, was appointed Associate Justice of the Supreme Court. With the death of Chief Justice Marshall in the Spring of 1836, Taney was appointed to the highest judicial office in the United States.

On October 12, 1864, only after a lifetime of judiciary politics including twenty-five years as Chief Justice, Taney passed away.

Samuel Freeman Miller, appointed by Lincoln in 1862 to the Supreme Court, and one of its great judges, gave the benediction at Taney's interment with these words of praise,

" . . . before the first term of my service in the court has passed, I more than liked him, I loved him. And after all has been said of that great, good man, I stand always ready to say that conscience was his guide and sense of duty his principle."