

*** AMERICAN STATESMEN ***

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THADDEUS STEVENS

BY

SAMUEL W. McCALL



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PREFACE

THADDEUS STEVENS was the unquestioned leader of the House of Representatives from July 4, 1861, when it assembled at the call of Lincoln, until his death, which occurred in 1868. The legislative work of that period stands unapproached in difficulty and importance in the history of Congress, if not, indeed, of any parliamentary body in the world. Stevens was the chairman of the Committee on Ways and Means during the war, and afterwards of the Committees on Appropriations and Reconstruction. He was, therefore, especially identified with the financial measures of the war, including the legal tender acts, also with reconstruction, with the great constitutional amendments, and with the impeachment of President Johnson. I have dwelt very slightly upon his connection, during the later period of his congressional service, with other matters, which, although some of them would have been of great consequence in ordinary times, were dwarfed and robbed of interest by the stupendous events with which they were associated.

The fact that no extended biography of Stevens has ever been published would have very greatly augmented the difficulty of my work had it not been for the assistance which has been generously given me. I desire especially to acknowledge my obligation to Hon. Marriott Brosius, who has for many years represented Stevens's former district in Congress; to Professor C. F. Richardson, of Dartmouth College; to Mr. C. B. Tillinghast, of the Massachusetts State Library; to Mr. A. R. Spofford and Mr. J. Q. Howard, of the Library of Congress; and to those two venerable and distinguished statesmen, the Hon. Henry L. Dawes and Hon. George S. Boutwell, who served with Stevens in Congress during the war period, and were intimately associated with him in most of the important legislation of that era.

S. W. McCALL.

WASHINGTON, D. C., January 19, 1899.

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