

Stevenson, William Francis ^[1]

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by Louis A. Brown, 1994

23 Nov. 1861–12 Feb. 1942



Photographic portait fo the Honorable William F. Stevenson, by Harris & Ewing, taken between 1905 and 194^[2]. From the Harris & Ewing Collection, Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Online Catalog.

^[2]William Francis Stevenson, lawyer and congressman, was born at Loray, the son of Elizabeth McFarlan and William Sidney Stevenson. He was graduated from Davidson College ^[3] in 1885 and was awarded an LL.B. degree in 1921. In 1887 he was admitted to the bar in South Carolina. A South Carolina legislator from 1896 to 1902, he served as speaker of the house from 1900 to 1902. Stevenson was general counsel for the State Dispensary Commission as well as a member of the Chesterfield County Democratic committee (1888–1914), of which he was chairman from 1896 to 1902. Frequently referred to as "the most colorful figure in South Carolina politics," he acquired the nickname "Seaboard Bill" because for many years he was counsel for the Seaboard Air Line Railroad ^[4].



Photograph of President Franklin Roosevelt (FDR) signing the Small Home Loan Measure, 1933, by Harris & Ewing. From the Harris & Ewing Collection, Library of Congress Prints & Photographs Online Catalog. William F. Stevenson, Chairman of the Home Loan Bank Board, is listed among those seen in the photograph. [5]

Elected to the U.S. House of Representatives from the Fifth District of South Carolina in 1916, Stevenson held the seat until 1932. He was appointed to the Federal Home Loan Bank Board in 1933 and served as chairman during the period 6 March–12 November 1933; he retired from the board in 1939.

Stevenson was an elder of the Presbyterian church [6]. He was largely responsible for the publication of the second edition of a family genealogy in 1926. Although married three times, he had no children. He married first Mary Elizabeth Prince in 1888. Two years after her death in 1924, he married Clara Malloy Finney, who died in the early 1930s. On 24 June 1936 he married Ruth Culberson, who survived him. He was buried at Cheraw, S.C., where he had moved as a young man when he became head of the Cheraw Academy.

References:

Biog. Dir. Am. Cong. (1989).

Family letters, notes, and genealogical tables (possession of Miss Mabel Stevenson and Tom Stevenson, Stony Point, N.C.).

J. C. Hemphill, *Men of Mark in South Carolina* vol. 3 (1908). [7]

Washington Evening Star, 13 Feb. 1942.

Who Was Who in America (1950).

Additional Resources:

"Stevenson, William Francis, (1861 - 1942)." *Biographical Directory of the United States Congress*. Washington, D.C.: The Congress. <http://bioguide.congress.gov/scripts/biodisplay.pl?index=S000895> [8] (accessed April 21, 2014).

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Harris & Ewing. "Stevenson, William F. Honorable". Photograph. 1905-1945. Harris & Ewing Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/hec2009005345/> [2] (accessed April 21, 2014).

Harris & Ewing. "[President Franklin Roosevelt signing Home Loan Measure]." Photograph. 1933. Harris & Ewing Collection, Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/hec2013015299/> [5] (accessed April 21, 2014).

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