



# Edmund G. Ross: Soldier, Senator, Abolitionist

*Richard A. Ruddy*

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Thanks to John F. Kennedy's *Profiles in Courage*, most twenty-first-century Americans who remember Edmund G. Ross (1826-1907) know only that he cast an important vote as a U.S. senator from Kansas that prevented the conviction of President Andrew Johnson of "high crimes and misdemeanors," allowing Johnson to stay in office. But Ross was also a significant abolitionist, journalist, Union officer, and, eventually, territorial governor of New Mexico. This first full-scale biography of Ross reveals his importance in the history of the United States.

Ross's life reveals a great deal about who we were as Americans in the second half of the nineteenth century. He was involved in the abolitionist movement as both a journalist and a participant, as well as in the struggle to bring Kansas into the union as a free state. His career also involved him in the expansion of railroads west of the Mississippi, the Civil War, Reconstruction and the impeachment of Andrew Johnson, the Gilded Age with its greedy politicians and businessmen, and the expansion of the United States into the Southwest. In short, Ross's career represents the changes that the whole country experienced in the course of his lifetime. Moreover, Ross was an interesting character, resolute and consistent in his beliefs, who often paid a price for his integrity.

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