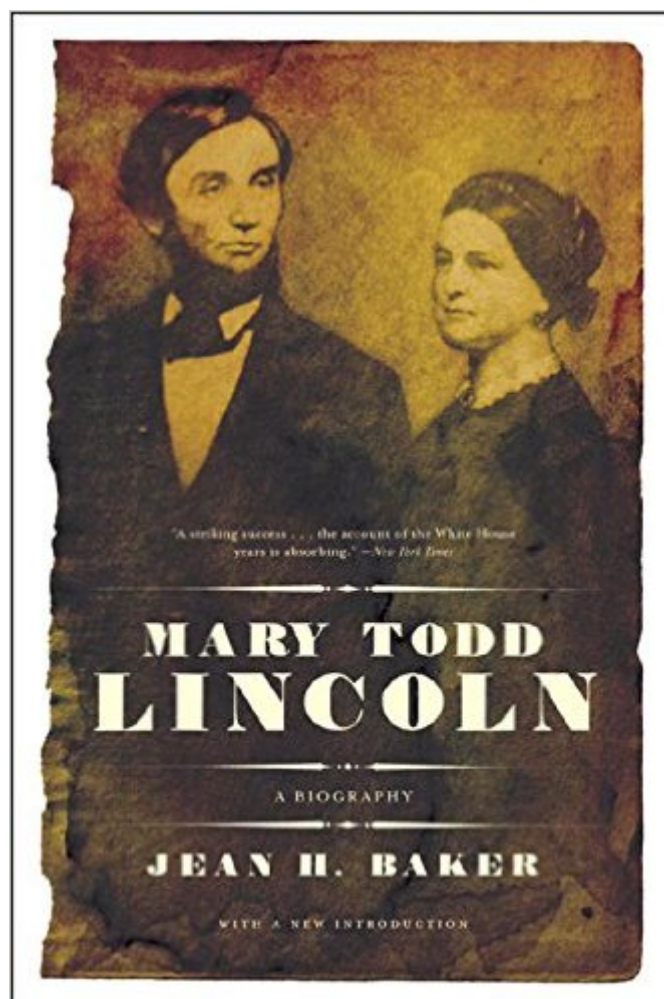


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Mary Todd Lincoln: A Biography



Synopsis

"A complex and moving character study of a woman tragically out of step with her time and place." •Chicago Tribune This definitive biography of Mary Todd Lincoln beautifully conveys her tumultuous life and times. A privileged daughter of the proud clan that founded Lexington, Kentucky, Mary fell into a stormy romance with the raw Illinois attorney Abraham Lincoln. For twenty-five years the Lincolns forged opposing temperaments into a tolerant, loving marriage. Even as the nation suffered secession and civil war, Mary experienced the tragedies of losing three of her four children and then her husband. An insanity trial orchestrated by her surviving son led to her confinement in an asylum. Mary Todd Lincoln is still often portrayed in one dimension, as the stereotype of the best-hated faults of all women. Here her life is restored for us whole. 9 pages of illustrations

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Jean Baker's biography of Mary Todd Lincoln is a well written work on an individual whose life was at once extraordinarily blessed and tragically cursed. Born in Lexington to an upper middle class family with a long history in Kentucky, Mary was given both the traditional lifestyle of the young southern belle and the unusual opportunity of an education. During a time when most women of her social class were almost invisible to the public world, Mary was better educated, more outgoing, more inclined to express a personal opinion, and more ambitious than others of her set. To some extent these are the reasons she reached the White House. They are also responsible for some of her social problems after leaving Washington. In fact, except for the early loss of her husband and children--a common tragedy for many women of the time--most of Mary Lincoln's troubles were the

outcome of her attitudes toward others and her extraordinary self-absorption. Even the loss of close family members merely presented an opportunity for her to assume the role of heroine in her own tragic drama, and she carried her mourning to extremes rather than give up center stage. Focus became not the sad death of young men at the very beginning of their lives or of a national loss of a great leader, but Mary Todd Lincoln's grief. When others refused to make her the center of their attention indefinitely, she apparently felt they were unreasonable, and her outbursts alienated many who might have helped her far more and more readily than they ultimately did. To say that she was a woman with great psychological and situation problems is an understatement.

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