

# Mary Todd Lincoln

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Mary Anne Todd Lincoln was born in Lexington, Kentucky, On December 13, 1818. She died at the home of her sister Elizabeth Edwards, Springfield, Illinois, On July 16, 1882. She was fourth of sixteen children, Mary was daughter to one of the town's wealthier and more prominent men, Robert Smith Todd. She was 63 years old. She was buried at The Lincoln Tomb, Oak Ridge Cemetery, in Springfield, Illinois. After meeting Abraham Lincoln in Springfield, Illinois, most people considered her a snob. Mart Todd Lincoln was very happy and energetic in her youth, the later on in her life she suffered subsequent ill health and personal tragedies and behaved erratically. Mary Todd Lincoln often liked to put flowers in a crown she wore on her head. Mary Todd Lincoln's strange behavior was caused by the deaths of her mother, husband, and children; there is no actual proof on whether she was suffering from a true mental illness. According to Robert McNamara (19<sup>th</sup> Century History Expert) "She was never diagnosed by anyone with a modern understanding of psychiatry." (McNamara, 2014) Mary was however judged insane by a kangaroo court<sup>1</sup>, and then confined to a sanctuary for disturbed ladies.

At the young age of six, Mary had experienced the pain of losing her mother, Eliza Ann Parker. She was born 1974 or 1975; she married Robert Todd November 26, 1812. She died July 6, 1825, in Lexington Kentucky.

Mary had lost two of her sons, one at the age of 11, and the other at the age of 18. She lost William (Willie) Wallace Lincoln at the age of 11, on February 20, 1862 from typhoid fever,

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<sup>1</sup> An unofficial court held by a group of people in order to try someone regarded, especially without good evidence, as guilty of a crime or misdemeanor.

and lost Thomas (Tad) Lincoln at age 18, on July 15, 1871 from tuberculosis. After Willie died she went into a period of mourning, as was supposedly told that if she did not stop she would be put in an insane asylum. It was his death that seemed to trigger her emotional problems.

The assassination of her husband was devastating to her, also she was sitting right beside him at Ford's Theater, when he was shot. She seemed to never recover from the trauma.

According to Biography.com Editors "On April 14, 1865, Mary Todd Lincoln sat next to her husband at Ford's Theatre when he was shot by an assassin, "John Wilks Booth". The president died the following day, and Mary Todd Lincoln never fully recovered, she fell into a deep depression." (Editors, n.d.)

According to Jackie Rosenhek "Some said that Mary claimed to hear voices through the walls; servants were forced to stand guard over their fearful mistress while she slept. Her alternating habits of wasteful spending and frugal saving were exposed before the court. Some historians believe she may have had bipolar disorder, though few would go so far as to diagnose schizophrenia, despite the fact that she seemed to suffer at times from psychosis and delusions." "Things worsened once 11-year-old William passed away, less than a year after Lincoln was elected. Mary's grief was so unrelenting that she was nearly institutionalized." (Rosenhek, 2006)

So to conclude Mary was suffering from the death of her mother, husband, and children.

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