



# House of Abraham: Lincoln and the Todds, A Family Divided by War

*Stephen Berry*

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For all the talk of the Civil War's pitting brother against brother, no book has told fully the story of one family ravaged by that conflict. And no family better illustrates the personal toll the war took than Lincoln's own. Mary Todd Lincoln was one of fourteen siblings who were split between the Confederacy and the Union. Three of her brothers fought, and two died, for the South. Several Todds—including Mary herself—bedeviled Lincoln's administration with their scandalous behavior. Their struggles haunted the president and moved him to avoid tactics or rhetoric that would dehumanize or scapegoat the Confederates. By drawing on his own familial experience, Lincoln was able to articulate a humanistic, even charitable view of the enemy that seems surpassingly wise in our time, let alone his.

In *House of Abraham*, the award-winning historian Stephen Berry fills a gap in Civil War history, showing how the war changed one family and how that family changed the course of the war.

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