



The Madness of Mary Lincoln

Jason Emerson

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In 2005, historian Jason Emerson discovered a steamer trunk formerly owned by Robert Todd Lincoln's lawyer and stowed in an attic for forty years. The trunk contained a rare find: twenty-five letters pertaining to Mary Todd Lincoln's life and insanity case, letters assumed long destroyed by the Lincoln family. Mary wrote twenty of the letters herself, more than half from the insane asylum to which her son Robert had her committed, and many in the months and years after.

The Madness of Mary Lincoln is the first examination of Mary Lincoln's mental illness based on the lost letters, and the first new interpretation of the insanity case in twenty years. This compelling story of the purported insanity of one of America's most tragic first ladies provides new and previously unpublished materials, including the psychiatric diagnosis of Mary's mental illness and her lost will.

Emerson charts Mary Lincoln's mental illness throughout her life and describes how a predisposition to psychiatric illness and a life of mental and emotional trauma led to her commitment to the asylum. The first to state unequivocally that Mary Lincoln suffered from bipolar disorder, Emerson offers a psychiatric perspective on the insanity case based on consultations with psychiatrist experts.

This book reveals Abraham Lincoln's understanding of his wife's mental illness and the degree to which he helped keep her stable. It also traces Mary's life after her husband's assassination, including her severe depression and physical ailments, the harsh public criticism she endured, the Old Clothes Scandal, and the death of her son Tad.

The Madness of Mary Lincoln is the story not only of Mary, but also of Robert. It details how he dealt with his mother's increasing irrationality and why it embarrassed his Victorian sensibilities; it explains the reasons he had his mother committed, his response to her suicide attempt, and her plot to murder him. It also shows why and how he ultimately agreed to her release from the asylum eight months early, and what their relationship was like until Mary's death.

This historical page-turner provides readers for the first time with the lost letters that historians had been in search of for eighty years.

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Ericka McCall:

Spent a free time and energy to be fun activity to do! A lot of people spent their leisure time with their family, or their friends. Usually they accomplishing activity like watching television, likely to beach, or picnic from the park. They actually doing same every week. Do you feel it? Will you something different to fill your own free time/ holiday? Might be reading a book may be option to fill your totally free time/ holiday. The first thing that you ask may be what kinds of guide that you should read. If you want to attempt look for book, may be the publication untitled The Madness of Mary Lincoln can be excellent book to read. May be it may be best activity to you.

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