

Mary Todd Lincoln

Born: December 13, 1818

Birthplace: Lexington, Kentucky

Married: Abraham Lincoln, November 4, 1842

The 1820 Census indicates that Mr. Todd, Mary's father, owned 3 female slaves.

The 1830 Census indicates that Mr. Todd owned 10 male slaves.

The 1840 Census indicates that Mr. Todd owned 3 female slaves, 2 male slaves and one free woman of color between 55 and 100 years of age.

Mary Lincoln's brother, George R.C. Todd and her half-brothers Alexander Todd, David Todd, and Samuel Todd all fought in the Confederate Army during the Civil War. Alexander Todd was killed at Baton Rouge. Samuel Todd was killed in the Battle of Shiloh. David Todd was wounded at Vicksburg. Her half-sister Emilie Helm's husband was a Confederate general killed at Chickamauga. The husbands of her half-sisters, Martha White and Elodie Dawson were ardent supporters of the Confederacy.

Mary Todd met Abraham Lincoln at a dance. Mary was one of the most educated women in the United States and Abraham Lincoln had less than a year of schooling, but they both intelligent and ambitious. They shared a love of poetry and, perhaps more importantly, politics. The Todd home was a gathering place for all of the prominent Whigs in Kentucky and Mary knew all of them, including Henry Clay.

Mary took an active role in promoting Abraham's political career. When he began seeking an appointive position, it was Mary Lincoln who handwrote his solicitation letters to Whig leaders. When he was offered the governorship of the faraway Oregon territory, she successfully advised against his accepting the post since it would remove him from a potential national position. She attended sessions of the state legislature at the capital and filled a notebook with the names of partisan allegiance of each member. She took a special interest in the transition of the Whig Party into the new Republican one and often wrote to influential friends in Kentucky regarding

Lincoln's views on slavery.

Sources:

Kentucky Government

The White House First Ladies Gallery

Mary Todd Lincoln House