



**Robert Smith Todd
(1791-1849)**

Mary Todd Lincoln was from a prominent Lexington family. Her father, Robert Smith Todd, was a wealthy businessman with connections to many noted bluegrass politicians.

The son of a pioneer founder of Lexington, Robert was born there in February 1791. He studied at Transylvania University, became a lawyer, and, in November 1812, married Eliza Parker. Their third child, born on December 13, 1818, was the future Mary Todd Lincoln.

When the War of 1812 erupted, Todd served in the 5th Regiment, Kentucky Volunteers. He later operated a successful grocery, spent decades as clerk of the Kentucky House of Representatives, and served in the Kentucky Senate. He was actively involved in local politics, serving on the Fayette (Fiscal) Court and the Lexington City Council. He was also a bank president and cotton merchant.

In 1825, his wife died, leaving him a thirty-four-year-old widower with six children. He later married Betsy Humphreys, leading to friction between the Todd children and their new stepmother. In 1832, Todd purchased a home on Main Street in Lexington. Now open to the public as the Mary Todd Lincoln House, the more urban environment where Mary Todd Lincoln lived greatly differed from the home of her future husband. It is likely that the entire Lincoln birth cabin would have fit into one room of the Todd House. Many of Todd's influential friends visited there, including Henry Clay and U. S. senator John J. Crittenden.

After Mary's marriage to Lincoln in 1842, Robert hired Lincoln as an attorney for several Illinois land cases.

Robert died on July 16, 1849, before his daughter became First Lady.

Robert S. Todd, date unknown
Private Collection