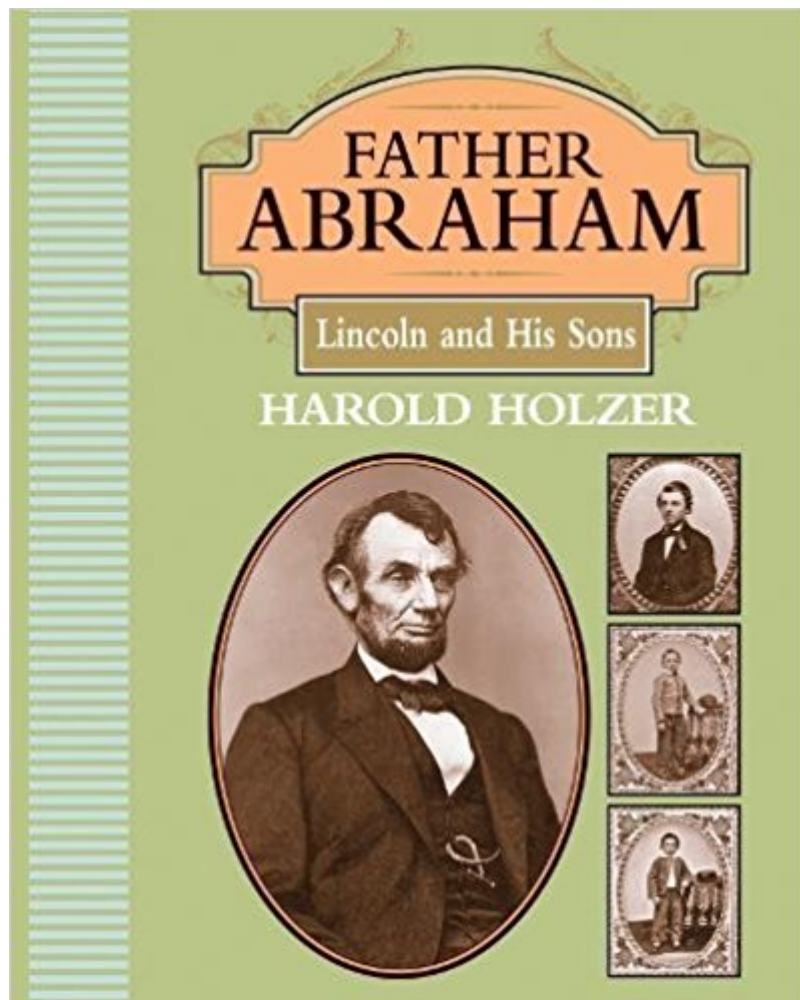




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# Father Abraham: Lincoln And His Sons (Orbis Pictus Honor Books Outstanding Nonfiction For Children)



## Synopsis

Abraham Lincoln was devoted to his country and to his family. President Lincoln called America a house divided, but he struggled to keep his own home united. It would prove to be an impossible task. Sickness, loss, and family tensions overwhelmed Abraham, Mary, and their four sons. Opening up the Lincoln family album, noted Lincoln scholar Harold Holzer highlights the family's heartaches and happiness. Illustrated with archival photographs and backed by extensive primary source material, this compelling NCTE Orbis Pictus Honor Book illuminates the private lives of four generations of a prominent American family.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Offers both a wagonload of fascinating period photos and a case study in domestic tragedy and dysfunction." --Kirkus Reviews \* "A unique book, this is a must-have for all libraries." --School Library Journal, starred review "A different view of Lincoln's personality as well as an unusually detailed portrayal of children growing up in the mid-1800s. A solid addition to American history collections." --Booklist

Harold Holzer, who served nine years as cochairman of the U.S. Lincoln Bicentennial Commission, has written, coauthored, or edited thirty-six books, along with chapters in several dozen others and more than 400 articles on Lincoln and the Civil War. His previous books for young readers are *Abraham Lincoln the Writer* and *The President is Shot!* Holzer was awarded the National

Humanities Medal by President Bush in 2008.

My friend is doing some research on Lincoln's sons, and he said the book was very helpful to him - he was pleased!

We needed this book for a report. My 10 year old loved reading it. Good information and quotes with pictures.

This is an captivating, quick read with photos I've not seen before. It is hard for me to put this one down. The story is simply told but not simplified and relates more about each relationship than I've read other places.

This book isn't just another story describing the triumphs of Abraham Lincoln. It goes deeper into his personal life and is beautifully written to be engaging and informative. It describes events before and after his presidency and has accounts from his sons and friends and others. There are many pictures of him and his family as well as writings and other pieces of history crucial to understanding this man. I would strongly encourage anyone interested in Lincoln or the Civil War to read this book. Especially if you want to know more about him besides how many battles he won on the field. It is like taking a peek at Abraham Lincoln's Family album and personal journal. Absolutely Fascinating.

Abraham Lincoln is a source of endless fascination to Americans of all ages; more books have been written about him than any other figure in American history. This new biography for young people by Lincoln expert Harold Holzer is a worthwhile addition to the pantheon of Lincoln books, and could be enjoyed by young people and adults alike. The outlines of Lincoln's life are well known to most of us; this volume concentrates on Lincoln's personality as a father, the lives of his four sons, and what happened to the two sons that survived him and to their descendants, a story that most people are less familiar with. Although Lincoln was famous for his wit and love of telling jokes, his private life was as imbued with personal sadness as his presidency was full of grief and sorrow for most U.S. citizens, a huge percentage of whom lost family members during the Civil War. Holzer chooses to begin his story with the death of Abraham Lincoln II, known as Jack--Lincoln's only grandson. Like three of Lincoln's own sons, Jack died tragically at a young age, succumbing to blood poisoning at the young age of sixteen. Holzer then turns his attention to the Lincolns who came before Jack, as the authors puts it, "the story of the clan that might have become America's royal family but instead

became America's cursed family--and then disappeared altogether." We learn about Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln's courtship, their early married life (in which they initially lived in one room in a boarding house--quite a shock for Mary Todd who came from a wealthy family). Their first son, Robert, was followed a few years later by Eddie, who was a sickly child and died shortly before his fourth birthday. Death of children was common in the 19th century; nonetheless, his parents were devastated. Lincoln cried openly, and Mary was in such despair that Abraham was forced to remind her, "Eat, Mary, for we must live." Although they never got over his loss, Mary was soon pregnant again, giving birth to Willie and then to Thomas, quickly nicknamed Tad, when his father remarked he looked like a baby frog, or tadpole. The book is full of colorful anecdotes about the Lincoln boys and their family life, including for example, excerpts of a charming letter little Willie wrote to a friend while on a trip with his father to Chicago in 1859. We also learn about their schooling; Robert Lincoln failed his first exams to get into Harvard, and Tad had such difficulty sitting still and learning to read that today he would probably have been diagnosed with learning disabilities. The Lincolns were incredibly indulgent parents, especially for their day, when children were expected to be "seen and not heard," and it is wonderful to imagine the gangly Lincoln lying on the floor with his young sons climbing all over him, as described in this book. The one son who lived into adulthood, Robert, became a cabinet minister under President Garfield, and ironically was present when Garfield, too, was shot by an assassin. Holzer paints a somewhat unsympathetic picture of Robert as a man; he is perhaps best known today for having his own mother committed to an insane asylum (she was later released). Toward the end of his mother's life, he took his daughter, Mary Todd's granddaughter, to see her, clearly trying to mend their relationship before Mary Todd's death.

I have given this book to a grandson as a Christmas gift. He seemed to be very excited to receive it . I do not have any additional info at this time.

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