

## **A Time of Mourning**

1850 was a sad year for the Lincoln Family. On Monday Jan. 22, 1850, Mary Todd Lincoln's beloved grandmother, Elizabeth R. Parker, passed away. This emotional blow was followed quickly by the death of the Lincoln's young son Eddie on February 1, 1850.

Mrs. Parker, who was one of the oldest residents of Lexington, had been in ill health for some time. Testifying in the Wickliffe suit had only further taxed her strength. She had sensed that her end was near and had a will drawn up on Christmas Eve. In her will she made several special provisions for her slaves; giving freedom to Prudence, Ann, and Cyrus, and also gave a pension to Prudence.

The Lincolns' son Eddie had been ill since December of 1849. He spent his last 52 days on earth fighting against an illness that left his doctors both confused and frustrated. For more than seven weeks Mary and Abraham, sat beside Eddie's bed, searching desperately for a way to save their beloved son. It was while sitting by Eddie's sick bed that they learned of "Grandma" Parker's death.

Upon Eddie's passing, the Lincoln family was desperate to escape their surroundings, which provided a constant reminder of little Eddie. Mary and Abraham decided now was the time to return to Lexington, to help settle Mrs. Parker's estate. Though this was Lincoln's first springtime visit to Lexington, he found that he could not enjoy the

beauty. Instead, he found himself studying the mysteries of the Hereafter.