



Behind the Scenes in the Lincoln White House: Memoirs of an African-American Seamstress (Civil War)

Elizabeth Keckley

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Born a slave in Virginia, Elizabeth Keckley (c. 1824–1907) went on to become a talented dressmaker and designer, with some twenty employees of her own. Catering to the wives, daughters, and sisters of Washington's political elite, she included among her clientele Mary Todd Lincoln, who became her close friend and confidante.

Keckley's behind-the-scenes view of wartime Washington not only provides fascinating glimpses of nineteenth-century America, but also offers candid observations on interracial relationships and the free black middle class. Here also are absorbing details of life in the Lincoln White House, as well as an insider's perspective on the men who made Civil War politics and the women who influenced them. A touching and revelatory work, filled with incisive social commentary, this inspiring narrative by an admirable woman will be an important addition to the libraries of anyone interested in African-American and Civil War history.

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