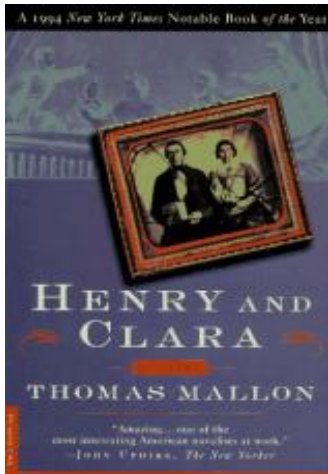


# Henry and Clara

by Thomas Mallon

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## About the Book

Henry Rathbone and Clara Harris, a young engaged couple, were President Lincoln's guests in his box the night he was shot at Ford's. Thomas Mallon searched through old newspaper accounts, military records, pension files, census reports, alumni records, and previously unstudied letters to put together the incredible and tragic story of Henry and Clara. Mallon follows Henry and Clara from childhood through married life, skillfully navigating the stretches of time with historical accuracy and finesse. With deft exercise of period detail and uncanny insight into human weakness and passion, Mallon has created an erotic and psychological mystery.

**Henry Clara** was recognized as one of the outstanding books of 1994 by the *New York Times Book Review*, *Publishers Weekly*, and the *Chicago Tribune*. Foreign rights have been sold to Germany and France, and the film has been optioned by Scripps Howard productions.

## Discussion Guide

1. Beyond entertainment, what can historical fiction teach us about the lessons of the past that is less well accomplished by straight history?
2. In what ways is Clara the victim of this story?
3. In what ways is Henry the victim?
4. Do you think Clara's story would have been different if her father had lived longer?
5. How difficult (legally and psychologically) might it have been for Clara to file for divorce?

6. Would the children really have been sacrificed during such a process, as Clara feared?
7. Why do you think Clara did not accompany Henry home after the assassination?
8. How does Thomas Mallon make the historical atmosphere of this novel convincing?
9. With each major event in Henry's life, his character appears to change. What qualities of his character, from the beginning, may have portended his final outcome?

## Author Bio

Thomas Mallon is the author of 11 novels, including *HENRY AND CLARA*, *DEWEY DEFEATS TRUMAN*, *FELLOW TRAVELERS*, *WATERGATE* and *LANDFALL*. He is a frequent contributor to *The New Yorker*, *The New York Times Book Review* and other publications. In 2011, he received the American Academy of Arts and Letters' Harold D. Vursell Memorial Award for prose style. He has been the literary editor of *GQ* and the deputy chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities. He lives in Washington, D.C.

## Critical Praise

"A pitch-perfect rendering mesmerizing and assiduously researched."

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**Publication Date:** August 15, 1995

**Paperback:** 358 pages

**Publisher:** Picador

**ISBN-10:** 0312135084

**ISBN-13:** 9780312135089