

**Lincoln at 100 at Lincoln:
The Abraham Lincoln Centennial Celebration in His First Namesake Town (1909)**

By D. Leigh Henson



Lincoln Centennial Medal by Jules Edouard Roiné of Paris

Photo source: The Joseph N. Nathanson Collection of Lincolniana, McGill University

Introduction

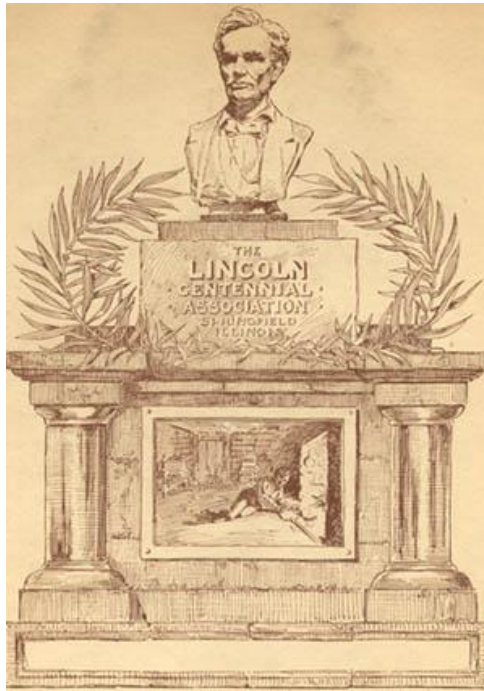
Springfield, MO, February 9, 2009; revised February 6, 2019. In 1909 many nations and communities in the US celebrated the centennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth. The Centennial Celebration Committee of New York City asked City Hall for \$25,000 for the event (*The New York Times*, Nov. 19, 1908). Chicago organized a committee of 100 citizens, who raised \$40,000 for a week-long celebration "to outdo the efforts of any [other] city in the United States as an example of patriotism" (*Lincoln Daily Courier*, Feb. 8, 1909, p. 1). Another grand celebration took place in Lincoln's hometown of Springfield, Illinois. There, the Lincoln Centennial Celebration was a great meeting and banquet in the Illinois State Armory, sponsored by the Lincoln Centennial Association (later renamed the Abraham Lincoln Association). The Springfield organizers had invited Booker T. Washington to speak, among others, but he had already committed to the celebration in New York.

Ironically, the 1909 Lincoln Centennial Celebration banquet in Springfield excluded blacks (Schwartz, p. 212)—the infamous Springfield race riots had erupted just months before—and the banquet occurred during the temperance movement. Yet the Springfield affair was extravagant and included wine, but it was reported that there would be "at least six dry tables. . . . Guests [would] show their temperance inclinations by turning glasses upside down" ("Booze Question Rampant," *Lincoln Daily Courier*, Feb. 6, 1909).

Lincoln biographer Benjamin P. Thomas describes the gala banquet held in Springfield and says that wine flowed freely: "The Lincoln Centennial Association arranged a magnificent patriotic meeting with speakers of international renown and a panoply of guests of national repute. . . . [The Association] planned a sumptuous banquet with tickets at twenty-five dollars a plate and wine to savor every course. As such affairs sometimes do, the banquet took an

unanticipated bacchanalian turn; and the ladies, barred from the board, but admitted to the balcony, watched with awe, or pride, or trepidation, each gauging the staying powers of her helpmeet, as viands and potations were laid by" (Thomas, *Portrait for Posterity*, p. 267. An article by Pete Sherman titled "Post-Riot Lincoln Bash Was a White-Only Affair" in the *Springfield Journal-Register*, May 31, 2008, gave a photo and description of the 1909 Lincoln banquet in Springfield. In 2019 that source is no longer online.)

The first Lincoln namesake town—Lincoln, Illinois—also celebrated this centennial. There is no indication that wine was served during the Lincoln Centennial Celebration in his first namesake town. Of course, Mr. Lincoln himself was a legendary abstainer. **A study of the planners, honorees and special guests, and speakers of this celebration provides insight into the social structure, Lincoln heritage, and other cultural elements of this small Midwestern town early in the 20th century.** The next section discusses the honorees and special guests because they are the key to understanding the town's social structure. Later, the planners and speakers will also be discussed.



Label for Various Books Endorsed by the Lincoln Centennial Association

Image source: author's copy of Wayne Whipple, *The Story-Life of Lincoln* (1909)

Designating Social Status: Honorees and Special Guests of the Namesake Town Celebration

The namesake town celebration apparently did not include a banquet and was a gathering in the Broadway Theatre on February 10, 1909 (this Theatre was later named the Grand Theatre, which burned in 1960, and became the site of Gossett's Cleaners). The first Lincoln namesake town Centennial Celebration consisted of a program of patriotic music, a recitation of the Gettysburg Address, and a featured speaker from Springfield, Euclid B. Rogers. Judge Lawrence B. Stringer of Lincoln, master of ceremonies, gave a short speech before introducing Rogers.



Broadway Theatre on Broadway Street, Lincoln, Illinois (undated)
Photo source: Main Street Lincoln by way of Stan Stringer

Americans in the early 20th century were very concerned with ceremony and social status, and the celebration in Lincoln, Illinois, reflected that concern. The most venerable attendees, understandably, were members of the local Leo W. Meyers Post of the Grand Army of the Republic (G.A.R.), and they were invited to sit on the stage (*Lincoln Daily Courier*, Feb. 4, 1909). Also, the organizers of this event gave special recognition to the town's social elite by naming "vice presidents" of the celebration. One newspaper article said the vice presidents would be seated in the prestigious "lower boxes of the theater" (*Lincoln Daily Courier*, Feb. 4, 1909). Another report said the vice presidents would sit on the platform, while city officials would occupy the lower box seats (*Lincoln Daily News*, Feb. 8, 1909). The names of the vice presidents as prominent citizens were announced in the *Lincoln Daily Courier* article titled "Lincoln Anniversary Plans Are Completed" (Feb. 4, 1909).

The following "vice presidents" are given in the order listed in the newspaper, and the order of these people by profession suggests that judges were first in social status, and clergymen were second: Judge Thomas M. Harris, Judge Donald McCormick, Judge James T. Hoblit, Judge Robert Humphrey, Judge Stephen A. Foley, the Honorable Edward D. Blinn, the Honorable Edwin C. Perkins (also a member of the General Committee), Father Charles A. Reidel, Father J.T. Mulgrew, the Reverend Gustav Niebuhr (also a member of the General Committee), the Reverend E.A. Gilliland (also a member of the General Committee), the Reverend W.A. Smith, the Reverend Otis A. Smith, and Father W.N. Wyckoff.

I researched the names of the other vice presidents to see what they did for a living because that factor was a key to their social status. The following vice presidents are given in the order listed in the newspaper: J.H. McMurray was President of Lincoln College in 1909 (Stringer, II, p. 8); Anthony Middletown was superintendent of city schools in 1909 (Stringer, II, p. 44); A.C. Boyd, a dry-goods merchant who occupied the Gillett Corner Building on the Logan County Courthouse Square (intersection of Kickapoo and Broadway Streets) (Beaver, *History of Logan County, Illinois*, 1982, p. 3); John E. Dehner, a businessman, owned grocery and hardware stores (Stringer, II, p.

176); John A. Lutz, a merchant, owned a large dry goods store on the square (Gleason, *Lincoln: A Pictorial History*, p. 65); Adam Denger was a businessman and one of the incorporators of the Lincoln Mutual Telephone Company and the Logan County Electric Light Company (Stringer, I, p. 549); E. Burton was also one of the incorporators of the Lincoln Mutual Telephone Company (Stringer, I, p. 549); Simon Niebuhr was on the board of the German M.E. Churches of Emden and Hartsburg, Illinois (Stringer, I, pp. 520–521), but his vocation was not found (perhaps he was a farmer or merchant); and Patrick McCann (no information found).



James H. McMurray, President of Lincoln College

Photo source: Lindstrom and Carruthers, *Lincoln: The Namesake College*, p. 48.

Some of the vice presidents were chosen because in 1909 they were distinguished senior citizens—contemporaries of Abraham Lincoln. Lewis Rosenthal had been a police magistrate of Lincoln, Illinois, in the 1850s and was the subject and source of an anecdote involving Abraham Lincoln paying taxes on the lot he owned on the square (Stringer, I, pp. 222–223).



Lewis Rosenthal

Photo source: Lincoln Woman's Club, *Views of Lincoln, Illinois, 1903*

J.T. Rudolph had been a Logan County constable in the 1850s (Stringer, I, p. 166) and was active in the Logan County Old Settlers Association (Stringer, I, p. 388); and A.B. Nicholson in the 1850s had been a "road supervisor" (Stringer, I, p. 166), was a principal organizer of a home guard at the beginning of the Civil War (Stringer, I, p. 169), and was sheriff of Logan County in 1860—61 (Stringer, I, p. 266).



A.B. Nicholson

Photo source: *History of Logan County, Illinois, 1886*, p. 670.

Sol Woland, probably Solomon J. Woland, was a retired farmer who in 1869 received a patent for a corn planter. Woland was also a former city attorney and retired lawyer who at the age of 66 planned to run for the state senate and was described by Stringer as "well qualified to represent the citizens who stand for clean government and sane legislative methods" (Stringer, II, pp. 8081); Samuel Sparks was a prominent retired farmer living in Lincoln (Stringer, II, p. 136–37); Andrew Layman was a farmer, candidate for county sheriff in 1890, and in 1909 a director of the Lincoln Chautauqua Association (Stringer, I, pp. 36, 303, and 471); and Thomas J. Pegram was a Civil War veteran—a captain in the Union Army (Stringer, I, p. 175). Pegram was probably one of the Union officers who had taken blacks to Lincoln because after the Civil War he had employed an ex-slave named William Camper ("Knew Plantation Life Before Emancipation," *Lincoln Evening Courier*, Oct. 18, 1939, p. 8).

The Planners: Distinguished Professional People and Businessmen

The newspaper accounts of the planning of the Lincoln namesake town Centennial Celebration identify the following members of the General Committee, and I located more information about these civic leaders in other sources as noted below. **There was much talent on this Committee; its members represented the business community and almost all the major professions: education, engineering, journalism, the law, medicine, the ministry, and politics/public service.** The only profession I can think of not included is science, but as a small town, Lincoln really did not have any industries that required scientists. All members were active in community service in many ways, and several members of this Committee were deeply committed to the Chautauqua of Lincoln, Illinois.

- **Mr. Thomas L. Blackburn** was born in Broadwell, Illinois, in 1861 and was raised on a farm. After working in several trades and businesses, he became an agent for the Indiana Bridge Company. Then he helped to found the Decatur Bridge Company in 1902, but he lived in Lincoln and was active in the Lincoln Chautauqua. In fact, he designed and engineered the open-sided, steel auditorium of the Lincoln Chautauqua, the first of its kind in the U.S. (Stringer, *History of Logan County, Illinois, 1911*, I, p. 468). Mr. Blackburn was a director of the Lincoln Chautauqua, 1907– (Stringer, I, p. 471) and its President, 1909–1910 (Stringer, I, p. 470). See the links below under Sources for information and photos of two iron bridges (still standing in rural Logan County in 2009) that were built by the Decatur Bridge Company as well as to a page with photos of the steel auditorium at the Chautauqua site in Lincoln.
- **Mr. A. E. Brown** was an active member of the First Baptist Church of Lincoln. He was on the building committee for the 1909 Baptist Church located at Broadway and Union Streets (Stringer, I, p. 495), and this building stands in 2009. In 1908 he was on the city council (Stringer, I, p. 585).
- **Mr. Morris Emmerson**



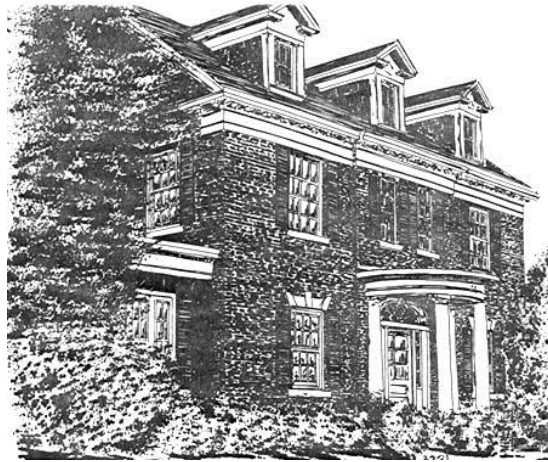
Morris Emmerson

Photo source: *Lincoln Woman's Club Views 1903*

Mr. Morris Emmerson in 1909 was the editor of the *Daily News-Herald* in Lincoln. He "was born in the village of Wanborough, Edwards County, Illinois, June 7, 1853. A graduate of the Bryant & Stratton Commercial College of St. Louis, he worked in the meat packing, banking, and dry goods industries before buying the *Albion Journal* newspaper in 1876. Mr. Emmerson had owned other newspapers in southern Illinois (Stringer, II, p. 309). He was the treasurer of the Lincoln Centennial Celebration; see Appendix A for his financial report on the event.

- **The Reverend E. A. Gilliland** in 1909 was the minister of the Disciples of Christ Church (the Christian Church) of Lincoln (Stringer, I, p. 502).
- **Mr. Charles Edward (C. E.) Gullett** (1865–1939) along with his brother, Wilbur J., joined their father, William H., in the family business of Gullett and Sons, Inc., which existed from 1865 to 1963 and was world famous for raising and shipping roses and other

flowers (Beaver, *History of Logan County, Illinois, 1982*, pp. 52 and 309). C. E. Gullett was very active in community service: member of the Lincoln schools Board of Education, 1904–1907 (Stringer, I, p. 431); in 1909 vice president of the Board of Trustees of Lincoln University (later Lincoln College) (Stringer, I, p. 446); secretary of the Lincoln Chautauqua Association, 1907– (Stringer, I, p. 470); and member of the Board of Directors of the Lincoln Public Library (Stringer, I, p. 478).



Home of Charles E. and Ida Gullett, 328 Logan Street, Lincoln, Illinois

Photo source: David Alan Badger, *The Badger Collection Featuring Lincoln of Illinois*

- **William Wesley (W.W.) Houser, M.D.** Dr. Houser, who was 72 in 1909, had met Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant, and he was one of the Union officers who, after the war, took blacks to live in Lincoln, Illinois, according to Houser family history as reported in the *Lincoln Evening Courier* in its special city centennial edition of 1953.



William W. Houser, M.D.

Photo source: *Lincoln Evening Courier*, Section One, Aug. 26, 1953, p. 13, col. 2.

The following family history was provided in 1953 by Dr. Houser's daughters: Mrs. Maude Cossitt, Mrs. Georgiana Crain, and Mrs. Alexander DuBois:

“Dr. William Wesley Houser was born near Felicity, Ohio, September 18, 1837. He was educated in the public schools of Ohio and Illinois, coming to this state with his father's family in 1852, and graduating with honors from the Eclectic Medical Institution of Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1859.

From this time until the outbreak of the Civil War, he engaged in the practice of medicine in the towns of Ullin and Loda, Illinois. When the call for volunteers came, he enlisted from Loda, serving first as Acting Assistant Surgeon in the U.S. Army, and later as Surgeon of the 124th U.S.T. He was invested with the honorable rank of Major Surgeon.

Immediately after being mustered out of the Army in October 1865, he settled in Lincoln. **Arriving on horseback in full Regimentals, followed by a colored orderly, he cut quite a dash** [emphasis mine]. He opened an office on north Kickapoo Street in the 100 block. It was while residing here that he met Miss Ellen Oliver, just graduated from an eastern art college. They were married in 1868 and reared a family of five children, two sons now deceased and the three daughters.

During his residence in Lincoln, Dr. Houser was elected Coroner of Logan County for a term of four years, being on the same ticket with General U.S. Grant. There was a wide difference between them as Grant was on top of the ticket, Dr. Houser on the bottom.

Dr. Houser had the distinguished honor of holding private conversations with both Abraham Lincoln and General Grant. He was actively engaged in the practice of medicine and surgery for 50 years in Lincoln” (*Lincoln Evening Courier*, Section One, Aug. 26, 1953, p. 13, col. 1).

Dr. Houser was an early advocate of Decoration (Memorial) Day (Stringer, I, p. 207). Dr. Houser's office was the site of the meeting of the Lincoln Centennial Celebration General Committee of Lincoln, Illinois, in which plans were finalized for the Celebration ("Lincoln Anniversary Plans Are Completed," *Lincoln Daily Courier*, Feb. 4, 1909).

- **Dr. L.N. Lawrance**, originally from Atlanta, Illinois, had been a member of the Republican advocacy group known as the Wide-a-Wakes that formed in 1860 to support the presidential candidacy of Abraham Lincoln (Stringer, I, p. 229). Dr. Lawrance was president of the Lincoln Public Schools Board of Education, 1906– (Stringer, I, p. 431) and a commissioner of the Lincoln Savings & Building Association (Stringer, I, p. 548).
- **Mr. James B. (J.B.) Lloyd** in 1909 was editor of the *Lincoln Courier* and owned half interest in that business. Of all member of the Lincoln Centennial Celebration General Committee, Mr. Lloyd had the strongest Southern background. He was born at Tarboro, North Carolina, April 13, 1869. Journalism was his first career, and he began as a correspondent for papers in his native state, advancing to associate editor of the *Tarboro Daily Southerner*. For nine years he "was actively identified with the North Carolina State Guard," and for nearly two years was in command of a military company. He was an

assistant Sergeant-at-Arms of the United States Senate. In Washington, he wrote editorials for a North Carolina newspaper and kept in touch with public officials there. He read law at the University of North Carolina and was a trustee of that institution for eight years (Stringer, I, p. 335).

- **Dr. J.A. Lucas** was the only General Committee member of the local Lincoln Centennial Celebration who was also a member of the state Lincoln Centennial Association (*The Lincoln Yearbook*, p. vi). Lucas was born in Ross County, Ohio, May 16, 1852, and was raised on a farm in Champaign County, Illinois, where his parents had moved. At eighteen, he earned a teacher's certificate; he taught during the winters and farmed in the summers, but he also attended the University of Illinois, Illinois State Normal University, Illinois Wesleyan University, and Eastern College in Danville, Illinois, where he became a Methodist preacher. After a short time as a preacher in Kansas, he completed a theological course in Evanston "in the largest and best endowed school of its kind in Methodism" (Stringer, II, p. 341). After church positions in Saybrook, Gibson City, Carlinville, and Clinton, he became superintendent of the Odd Fellows Home in Lincoln. He received two honorary master's degrees and an honorary Doctor of Divinity (Stringer, II, p. 342).
- **Reverend Gustav Niebuhr** in 1902 became the pastor of the St. John's Evangelical Church of Lincoln and was the director of its school and the superintendent of the Deaconess Hospital (Stringer, II, pp. 140–141). "Rev. Niebuhr is a forceful speaker and the work that he has accomplished for the benefit of his fellowmen has been far-reaching and cannot be calculated. He is untiring in his efforts in promoting the interests of his church and has not only gained the love and confidence of parishioners but has the respect and esteem of all who know him" (Stringer, II, p. 141). Niebuhr was the patriarch of a family of notable theologians. When Gustav died suddenly in 1913, his twenty-year-old son, Reinhold, took his place before advancing his distinguished academic career that led him to become one of *Time* magazine's most important people of the 20th century and a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1964.



Reverend Gustav Niebuhr

Photo source: <http://www.lippe-auswanderer.de/beruehmte/niebuhr.htm>.

- **The Honorable E.C. Perkins** was a teacher, lawyer, and distinguished politician at the local and state levels. "After teaching school several years, he read law and was admitted to the bar in 1889" (Stringer, I, p. 345). Mr. Perkins was an original member of the Logan County Teachers' Association (Stringer, I, p. 414); a member of the Logan County Bar

Association (Stringer, I, p. 343); a Justice of the Peace in 1889 and 1893 (Stringer, I, p. 251); City Attorney of Lincoln, 1891–1893 (Stringer, I, p. 584); a State Representative, 1908– (Stringer, I, p. 266); and a director of the Lincoln Chautauqua Association, 1908–1909 (Stringer, I, p. 471).

- **Dr. C. Rembe** was a physician and past president of the Logan County Medical Society (Stringer, I, p. 554).
- **Mr. Emil Sexauer** in 1909 was the owner of the German newspaper the *Voksblatt-Rundschau* (Stringer, I, p. 486).
- **Mr. Joseph Tabke.** The index of Stringer's *History of Logan County, Illinois, 1911*, lists a J.A. Tabke, a Joseph Tabke, and a Joseph A. Tabke. These probably refer to the same person. The citation for Joseph Tabke in the Index of Stringer's *History* refers to a biographical sketch in Volume II, where the title of the entry is J.A. Tabke, who in 1909 was cashier of the German-American bank. Upon first arriving in Lincoln in 1878, he taught at St. Mary's School for five years, but the salary did not enable him to care for his parents and sisters adequately. With a position at the Lincoln National Bank as collector, "he determined to learn the business thoroughly and after one year's service there was made assistant cashier of the German-American Bank. Efficient, energetic and reliable, his services were thoroughly appreciated by those in control of the bank and in 1907 was appointed cashier" (Stringer, II, pp. 40–41). In 1902 Joseph Tabke was on the Board of Education of the Lincoln Public Schools, and in 1903 he was an alderman of the Third Ward (Stringer, I, p. 585).
- **Mr. Harold F. Trapp**



Harold F. Trapp, Sr.

Photo source: Dooley, ed., *The Namesake Town: A Centennial History of Lincoln, Illinois*, p. 67.

Mr. Harold Frederick Trapp, Sr., (1877–1951) "was born in Logan County and was admitted to the bar in 1900. He [was] associated in a law partnership with T.T. Beach, under the firm name of Beach & Trapp. He [was] a member of the Lincoln Board of Education for several years past" (Stringer, I, p. 345).

Harold F. Trapp, Sr., was the son Frederick and Emma Rubly Trapp of Springfield, Illinois. Attorney Harold Trapp's father had been a major legal and business counselor to the vast Scully estates: the Lincoln-based office of Scully and Koehnle was re-named Koehnle and Trapp in the 1880s. Frederick Trapp implemented an effective record-keeping procedure for the Scully estates. A later agent praised Trapp: "When Fred Trapp came, the records started, and the business really began to move. . . . He contributed much that could be of use to William Scully" (Socolofsky, *Landlord William Scully*, p. 87).

Harold F. Trapp, Sr., married Lillian Attchison April 20, 1908, at Mt. Pulaski. Their first son, Harold F. Trapp, Jr., also became an attorney and his father's law partner. Trapp, Jr., concluded his career as a Justice of the Illinois Appellate Court. Another son was Robert N. Trapp, M.D., whose life-long family practice was in Lincoln.

Harold F. Trapp, Sr., attended the University of Illinois, where he lettered in track and received his law degree. In Lincoln, Trapp read law in the firm of Beach and Hodnett, and after Mr. Beach's death continued the office. Trapp belonged to the American and Illinois Bar Associations. Also, he had been president of the Logan County Bar Association. In 1933 Mr. Trapp was a candidate for the Democratic nomination for Illinois Supreme Court justice in the third judicial district. A prominent trial lawyer, Mr. Trapp in 1950 was honored by the Illinois State Bar Association for 50 years of service to his profession.

Attorney Trapp resided at 227 Tremont Street in Lincoln and was deeply involved in the civic life of the community. He was a charter member of Lincoln Lodge 914 B.P.O. Elks. In addition, he was the organizer and first president of the Lincoln Rotary. Also, he served as a trustee of Lincoln College. Mr. Trapp was a member of the First Presbyterian Church (information from Mr. Trapp's obituary in the *Courier*, Jan. 24, 1951, p. 1).

Mr. Trapp's most celebrated case was his defense of several men arrested in the State Police gambling raids in Lincoln and Logan County in 1950. Mr. Trapp died before those proceedings were fully resolved. Access link below under Sources to a Web page about the gambling raids and legal proceedings.

All on the General Committee were males, but the Decorations Committee included both men and women: John A. Simpson, L.H. Davis, Dr. R.N. Lawrance, Mrs. Henry Boyd, Mrs. Richard Latham, and Mrs. John A. Lutz. For the women, I found information only for Mrs. Lutz.

- **Mrs. John A. (Caroline) Lutz** was an accomplished and distinguished civic leader at the local and state levels, as described in the following article of unknown authorship from the 1953 centennial edition of the *Lincoln Evening Courier* (following the photo below).



Mrs. John A. (Caroline) Lutz

Photo source: *Lincoln Evening Courier*, Section Six, Aug. 26, 1953, p. 6. col. 4.

“Caroline Chamberlain Lutz was born in Lyndon, Vermont, in 1844 and lived to be 92, a woman of rare intellectual attainments, a civic and social leader whose forceful personality left its imprint on the community in which she lived. Tall and stately, she exemplified the New England type of woman. She was educated at Emma Willard School for Young Women in Troy, New York, and a college at Cambridge, Massachusetts [perhaps Radcliffe, which was a women's liberal arts college and the coordinate college for Harvard University].

On leaving school she joined her parents who had moved to Illinois and taught school in Springfield. Here she met and married John A. Lutz, a young merchant who claimed the distinction of having sold Mary Todd the material for her wedding dress. They later moved to Lincoln, and Mr. Lutz established the dry goods firm of John A. Lutz and Sons of which he was head for 58 years.

Educated in the best schools in the country, Caroline Chamberlain Lutz felt the responsibility of sharing with others the advantage which had been hers. She organized the Lincoln Woman's Club, among the first such clubs in the state, was its first president and continued in that capacity for 16 years. She was a charter member of the Abraham Lincoln Chapter of the D.A.R. organized in 1896, a member of the State Board of Welfare; she was secretary of the state Federated Woman's Clubs; she was an officer and member of the Lincoln Library Board, being instrumental in securing the Louise Chamberlain Scully memorial book fund.

She was active in defense organizations, the Red Cross during World War I and compiled the history of this war and the first authentic record of Logan County men who served in this conflict now kept in the Public Library. She was one of the members from Lincoln of the Illinois Art Union, which was a

select group from Central Illinois towns. That organization did much to sponsor art and literary efforts. She was largely responsible for the existence of the Woman's Auxiliary, a missionary group in the Trinity Episcopal Church.

Mrs. Lutz was a great lover of flowers and helped organize the first Garden Club of Lincoln, second in the state. She reared two sons and two daughters of her own and a niece and nephew, and later two grandsons made their home with their grandparents.

Her home was the center of hospitality, and she combined a charm of personality with a rare generosity of sharing with others what was hers—a friend loyal and true, sacrificing herself for the benefit of others. She was an untiring reader and made her own conclusions from what she found of value between the pages she perused. In later life her most familiar place was by the fireside with a book on which she would comment to those who called upon her (*Lincoln Evening Courier*, Section Six, Aug. 26, 1953, p. 6. col. 4).



Mrs. John A. Lutz

Photo source: Dooley, ed., *The Namesake Town*, p. 55.



Home of John A. and Caroline Lutz, 204 Lincoln Avenue

Photo source: *The Badger Collection Featuring Lincoln of Illinois*

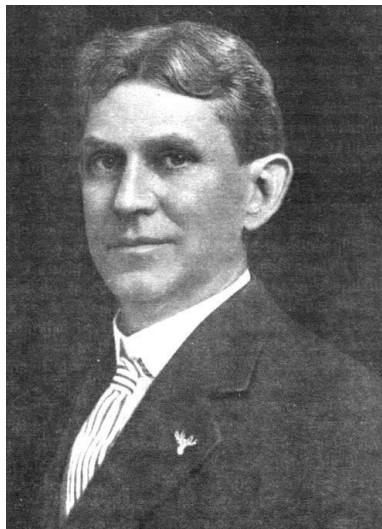
The preceding biographical information shows that the organizers of the Lincoln, Illinois, Centennial Celebration were quite well educated, and several succeeded in more than one career. All were variously active in community service—some as role models of leadership—and all were interested in improving the quality of life and culture in their town.

The Age of Oratory

Throughout the second half of the 19th century and well into the 20th century, oratory was the main form of celebrating occasions and eulogizing distinguished individuals. Speakers aspired to eloquence as the key to entertain, educate, and inspire. At the time of the Abraham Lincoln Centennial, there were many celebrations with countless speeches. (See the link below under Sources for full text of the 1909 *Lincoln Centennial Association Addresses Delivered at the Annual Banquet Held at Springfield, Illinois*.)

Lawrence B. Stringer, the author of the fabled *History of Logan County, Illinois, 1911*, was "the chairman" and master of ceremonies at the 1909 Lincoln namesake town Lincoln Centennial Celebration. Judge Stringer was an authority on Abraham Lincoln in Logan County: his *History of Logan County, Illinois, 1911*, has a chapter devoted to Abraham Lincoln in Logan County. Stringer was also a noted speaker on Abraham Lincoln and other subjects. Stringer even had a national audience when he spoke about Abraham Lincoln on a Columbia System coast-to-coast broadcast, at Lincoln, Illinois, February 12, 1938.

In 1909 the Chautauqua movement was growing nationally, and that venue provided opportunities for many professional orators. Judge Stringer was a founder and principal promoter of the Chautauqua of Lincoln, Illinois—the largest Chautauqua in Illinois. He was also a speaker on the Chautauqua circuit. See link below under Sources to promotional brochures used by Judge Stringer to advertise himself as a Chautauqua speaker.

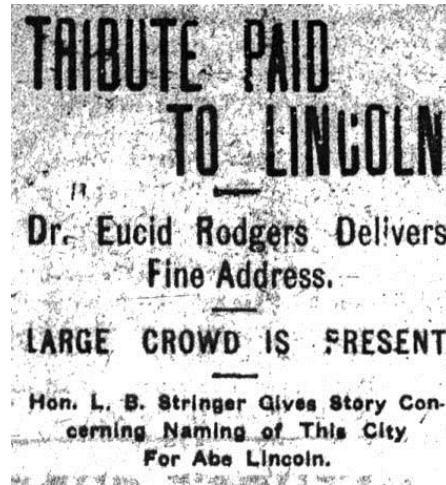


Judge Lawrence B. Stringer (1866–1942)

Photo source: Stringer, *History of Logan County, Illinois, 1911*

Music, Recitation, and Speeches in the First Lincoln Namesake City Lincoln Centennial Celebration

On February 11, 1909, the *Lincoln Daily Courier* carried the following report on the namesake city's Lincoln Centennial Celebration:



“Lincoln, the only city in the world named for Abraham Lincoln, by and with the great man's consent, Wednesday evening [Feb. 10, 1909] in a fitting manner celebrated the one-hundredth anniversary of his birth. The event was celebrated in the Broadway Theatre by a long program in which a large number of Lincoln people took part. It was a celebration for, by and of the people, a tribute from all the people to the memory of their illustrious former president.

Famed in history and story, it was impossible to add further laurels to the deceased president or to add to the luster of his name, but the celebration brought forth a lofty tribute from the speaker of the evening, Rev. Euclid B. Rogers, pastor of the Central Baptist Church of Springfield, and **further, an original story by the chairman of the evening, the Hon. L.B. Stringer, concerning the manner in which this city was named, which adds to Lincoln's fame and gave the auditors an insight into some of the city's history, which before that time has remained a closed book** [emphasis mine].

Program Commenced.

The evening exercises were commenced about 7:45 with a concert by a large orchestra of musicians of the city under the direction of Prof. H.O. Merry. The orchestra played a program of half a dozen or more selections in the half hour allotted to them for concert work, and the same was duly appreciated by the audience and especially by the committee in charge of the celebration which was lavish in its praise of the musicians of the city who took part in this portion of the exercises. It was about 8:15 p.m. when the concert was over.”



Professor Herbert Oral Merry

Photo source: 1928 *Emancipator* (Lincoln College yearbook)

“The second part of the program was the singing of a choir under the direction of B.C. Roberts. The city singers did not respond as liberally as did the instrumentalists and as a result the choir was not so large as expected. One number was cut out and the singing of "The Star-Spangled Banner" by the audience, accompanied by choir and orchestra, was the opening number. Later this was followed by the song, "Columbia, the Gem of the Ocean."

Following the opening song, Hon. L.B. Stringer, chairman of the evening, arose and gave a short talk. *This talk[,] while brief, gave the details of a story of how Lincoln came to have its present name. The story is new in this city and of more than ordinary interest.* That is the one of the reasons why Mr. Stringer's short talk was unusually enjoyable.

How Lincoln Was Named.

Mr. Stringer said that more than half a century ago, three men, then prominent in this vicinity decided to lay out a city. These men were Robert Latham, John Gillett and Virgil Hickox, three men whose names now are to be found dotted many places on the records of the recorder of this county. They had decided to have the town site platted and wanted it incorporated. The story has it that there was traveling through these parts at that time, a certain loose-jointed, elongated, impecunious lawyer, who made the judicial circuit in pursuance of his law cases. The man was not much known excepting for a type of shrewdness, and a sincerity of purpose that caused these men, then among the early day promoters, to enlist his service.

They wanted a charter. They knew that they wanted one of liberal provisions[,] and about the handiest man to do the job was the impecunious lawyer referred to. *They asked the man to do the work and told him among other things, that if he secured for them what the[y] wanted they would honor him by naming the town for him. The man took the job remarking in a diffident way something to the effect that the men certainly would regret having named their future city for him. He took the job*

however and secured the charter as the promoters wanted it. It proved that the lawyer's name was Abraham Lincoln[,] and that this city was named for him at that time [emphases mine].

That is one reason why, said Mr. Stringer, that this city takes precedence among all cities named "Lincoln," in the broad country. It is the only city which with the consent and approval of Abraham Lincoln bears his name. Another thing, it was not named for him after he had arisen to fame, but when he was a poor man, unknown to fame and unused to praise.

Gettysburg Address.

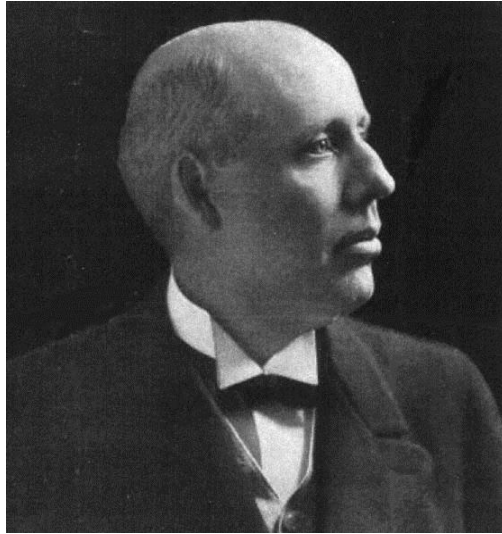
Mr. Stringer then made reference to the famous Gettysburg Address which, from the mouth of a man uncultured in the art of letters, has stood in a place by itself, recognized the world over as a gem of literary worth unsurpassed. He said that while this address had often been heard, it never grew old and he closed by calling on W.C. McMasters to recite the famous address, which he did.

Dr. Rogers' Address.

Mr. Stringer introduced the eloquent Rev. Euclid B. Rodgers [*sic*] to the audience as the orator of the evening. Dr. Rodgers then launched into an oration, a tribute to Lincoln, as beautiful as anything ever heard here on a similar occasion. It would be impossible to give an adequate idea of the same by extractions therefrom. The language was eloquent and abounding in illustrations and quotations therefrom the life and words of the martyred president. The speaker began at the earliest period of the career of Lincoln, after delivering an eulogy on his memory. In his biographical sketch he touched on the early vicissitudes of Lincoln, from his birth in Kentucky, through his career in Indiana and Illinois. He later brought out the great results of early studiousness and application, the consequences of character formation gained by study of ideals of purity and greatness of the highest type. He traced his career up to the year of '65 when the bullet of the assassin laid him low and rid the world of one of its greatest characters."

The Multi-Faceted Career of Euclid B. Rogers

The featured speaker of the Lincoln namesake town Lincoln Centennial Celebration, Euclid B. (Beauclerc) Rogers (1852–1931), for many years had been the pastor of the Central Baptist Church of Springfield, Illinois. In 1909 he was a member of the Lincoln Centennial Association, and at some time in 1909 became a pastor in Champaign, Illinois. In the early 20th century, he was well known throughout the Midwest as an orator: he was equally at home in the pulpit and on the stages of the Chautauqua speaking circuit.



Euclid B. Rogers

Photo source: University of Iowa Digital Library

My research on Euclid B. Rogers could not avoid some gaps in his biographical information. According to www.rootswebancestry.com (link below under Sources), "Euclid B. Rogers was born in Norwich [New York], March 1, 1852, and educated at Norwich Academy and Madison University. He read law with Isaac S. Newton, of Norwich, commencing in 1871, and afterwards with Chapman & Martin, of Binghamton. He was admitted in 1876, and commenced practice in Norwich."

After Rogers left the East for the Midwest, he included biographical sketches in the brochures he used to promote himself as an orator on the Chautauqua circuit. One of those sketches says he was "born in the Chenango Valley in the State of New York. Educated at Norwich Academy and Colgate University. A fraternity man. A base ball [*sic*] player and all-round athlete. Edited a weekly paper and read law. Admitted to the Bar at Albany. Ordained to the gospel ministry by his home church, Norwich, N.Y." In his promotional brochures, Rogers claims to have held the degree of Doctor of Divinity, but he does not specify whether it was an earned degree or an honorary degree, nor does he name the granting institution.

Rogers chose to pursue the ministry rather than the law. One source indicates that from 1887 to 1889 he was pastor of a Baptist church in Venango County, Pennsylvania (*Venango, Pennsylvania: Her Pioneers and People*, p. 227). He apparently left Pennsylvania to become a pastor in Iowa, and in that position in 1890 his checkered past led to a controversy significant enough to make news in *The New York Times* in an article titled "Old Charges Renewed: The Dilemma in Which Mr. Rogers's Church Finds Itself":

Burlington, Iowa, Dec. 9—Several weeks ago the Rev. Euclid B. Rogers, pastor of the First Baptist Church in this city, was publicly vindicated from various serious charges preferred by persons in Franklin, Penn., where Mr. Rogers was pastor previous to his coming to Burlington. His vindication was telegraphed to Eastern newspapers, and finally reached the notice of the Franklin congregation. Thereupon the Franklin Baptist Church met in session

and unanimously adopted a series of resolutions disclaiming that Rogers had been vindicated in the light of known facts, and reciting at great length reasons why he had been dismissed from his old charge.

The resolutions have been forwarded to the church here [Burlington]. Among the statements made are these: That Rogers, while living with his wife, made an engagement to marry a young woman of his congregation, and then sought through cruelty toward his wife to secure a divorce. The words of the Judge in reviewing the case are quoted as follows:

"If the testimony is to be believed, and being uncontradicted it must be assumed to be true, the only wonder is that such a long-continued series of brutalities and indignities could occur in a civilized community."

These and many other things the resolutions charge, and, together with numerous letters and sworn statements, were forwarded to Burlington. Rogers says a certain millionaire in Franklin is persecuting him and is the author of all these documents, and he claims to be innocent of every charge. A further investigation is being held, and the local congregation is divided in the matter, a large number of influential members having withdrawn from the church on Rogers's account" (*The New York Times*, Dec. 10, 1890).

I found no further information about whether the charges of sexual impropriety were true or false. Yet, one of Reverend Rogers's promotional brochures says that "his ministry, **every year of it**, rated a success" [emphasis mine]. The very fact that he had been embroiled in the controversies indicated above calls that claim into question.

It is unclear exactly when Rogers left Iowa, but according to a testimonial in one of his promotional brochures as a speaker on the Chautauqua circuit, an attorney in Springfield, Illinois, described Rogers as a very successful pastor in that city. The attorney, E. L. Chapin, wrote in praise of Rogers: "for seventeen years, 1892–1909, Dr. Rogers was the loved pastor of the Central Baptist Church of this city. He is an ideal man, physically, mentally, and spiritually. As a pulpit orator he holds his audience from the beginning until the last word is spoken. High and low; rich and poor; learned and unlearned—all—hang on his words as he points the despondent upward; throws a loving arm around the weak and erring; directs the self-satisfied to a higher life; and hurls mighty thunderbolts into the ranks of evil. . . ."

After Rogers left his position in Springfield, he was a minister at the First Baptist Church in Champaign, Illinois, but I find no information on how long. He may have returned to Springfield later. His last years are obscure. In the 1910s and 1920s he may have left full-time ministerial work to speak on the Chautauqua circuit. The inscription on a photo allegedly showing him in his den/library (below) indicates that he spent time away from home: "The Den—No Splendor, No Particular Harmony, No Beauty, but—There's nothing so good to return after bookless weeks to one's books; To seek one's books; To seek one's own accustomed easeful place. Snow—girt without, the blazing logs within."

Among the numerous testimonials stated in Rogers's promotional brochures as a speaker on the Chautauqua circuit are those of an unnamed newspaper in Lincoln, Illinois; Judge Stringer; and Mr. C. E. Gullett. Their testimonials indicate that Rogers was well known in that city. The newspaper blurb says, "Dr. Rogers has been heard here [Lincoln, Illinois] before, and those who were acquainted with his manner of delivery, his eloquence of utterance, and his prepossessing manner, while prepared for an eloquent address, were instructed and entertained for fully one and one-half hours. It was one of the finest efforts ever heard in this city." The program of the Lincoln Chautauqua for the week of August 12–25, 1908, lists Rogers as the minister giving the sermon on Sunday, August 23. (See Appendix C for the Chautauqua schedule of several days.)

As a chairman of the Lincoln, Illinois, Chautauqua program committee, C.E. Gullett praised Rogers: "I am glad to learn that Dr. Euclid B. Rogers contemplates devoting more time in the near future to the lecture platform. He will bring unusual gifts of oratory to charm Lyceum and Chautauqua audiences. I have heard Dr. Rogers often—always with increasing admiration. He fits great occasions. As one Chautauqua committeeman speaking frankly to others, I say that Dr. Rogers will hold your most exacting hearers to his last syllable, and send them back to their tents with a new zeal for noble endeavor."

Judge Stringer wrote, "I regard Dr. Euclid B. Rogers as one of the inspiring orators of the American platform. His eloquence and ability, coupled with a pleasing personality and address, make him a favorite with his audiences. His lectures are entertaining, yet instructive and uplifting. He makes good on all occasions, and I unhesitatingly recommend him."

Promotional brochures, of course, present their subjects in positive ways, but observations that recur in the newspaper reviews and personal testimonials indicate that Rogers was skillful in rhetoric: he knew how to adapt communicative purpose, content, language, and delivery to the occasion and audience. He knew how to inform, entertain with anecdotes, and inspire.

His subject matter was diverse: for example, he could talk about athletics, Christianity, education, literature, history, politics, and current events. Among the current events Rogers had opinions about were the race riots that had taken place in Springfield, Illinois, in 1908. A 2007 article in the *Springfield Journal-Register* quoted one of its 1908 editions showing Rogers as an outspoken social critic: "a few days after the Springfield race riot in 1908, Central Baptist Church pastor E.B. Rogers criticized the white rioters. But, speculating as to what enraged them in the first place, he suggested the black voter was partly to blame. . . . Rogers was quoted as saying in the August 17, 1908, *Illinois State Journal* that one of his "solutions [to the race problem] was to grant voting privileges only to citizens, black or white, who could pass an education test." Another example of his activism is that on May 15, 1923, Rogers gave a speech to the Illinois House of Representatives on appropriations to the attorney general for law enforcement.

The following descriptions of two of his lectures suggest that Rogers was a community activist, and these descriptions sometimes sound contemporary in 2009. The lecture titled "The Twentieth Century Church" is described as follows: "As promoter, producer, organizer and achiever the Church stands without a rival. She is so big that anybody can hit her. Great changes in social and industrial life have required Governmental, Educational, Political, Judicial, Commercial and Professional adjustment to changed conditions, and the Church must change her methods and adapt her message to this era."

The lecture titled "America's Biggest Job" is described as follows: "from time immemorial the Rights of Man have been urged and fought for. The Rights of Labor has been a theme of great moment. The Rights of Woman have been discussed and orated upon. But now as never before we are face[d] with the Rights of the Child, and America's Biggest Job is to see to it that the Child, Every Child, gets his rights." One of his promotional brochures says that *Chicago Tribune* called him "An Ecclesiastical Insurgent."

Rogers developed the subject matter of his sermons and lectures through research and wide reading. The Reverend Austen K. De Bois, D.D., Pastor of the First Baptist Church of Chicago, noted that Rogers "has been a student of literature and history, ranging over wide fields and systematizing his study and reading as he went vigorously forward. He combines, in a rare degree, the gifts of the literary critic, the student of human nature, and the orator."

The biographical sketch on one of Rogers's promotional brochures describes him as "A book buyer and a book reader—'oftentimes a casual glance between two old covers lets great spirits free.' He who kindles his thought at the urns of the Great Thinkers glitters with perennial glow. An interested student of men and movements, out where books come true." The photo below appears in one of Rogers's promotional brochures, giving the impression that he was a scholar who carefully researched his presentations and publications, but the brochure does not identify the man or the setting.



Photo from Rogers's Chautauqua Promotional Brochure

Photo source: University of Iowa Digital Library

Rogers's most ambitious scholarly work is *Heaven—Immortality*, a collection of other people's "Sermons, Editorials, Addresses, Poems from Many Sources," published in 1908. This work consists of twenty volumes totaling 2,000 pages.

With "high ideals and sincere purposes," Rogers had the skills of language and delivery to present his subject matter in ways that engaged his listeners. The *Saturday Review* of Springfield, Illinois, described Rogers as "a man of deep convictions on all practical questions of the day, nor does he hesitate to give forcible expression to these convictions. His immense audience was so carried away by his sledge-hammer blows and patriotic periods that they again and again broke over the reserve generally expected in a church on Sunday, and enthusiastically applauded the sentiments which fired their hearts." Others noted that Rogers's audiences were sometimes taken with "convulsions of laughter" and "spontaneous cheers and handclapping." The Reverend E.W.

Lounsbury, D.D., an officer in the Foreign Mission Society of Chicago, summed up Rogers's skill with language and delivery: "Every sentence a gem, which charms while it penetrates; which convinces while it delights. . . . His dramatic power is one of his chief attractions. Had he chosen the stage there had been no rival."

By engaging his audience effectively, Rogers had the power to move them. The Reverend M.P. Boyton, D.D., Pastor of the Lexington Avenue Baptist Church of Chicago, praised Rogers as "one of the most powerful public speakers on the American platform today. His style is direct, and his delivery full of force. . . . He compels thought, while at the same time entertaining his auditor. He is inspirational. . . ." Others noted that the effect of Rogers's eloquence was that he had the ability to "persuade to move [listeners] to action," "to stir you with a passion for doing good and great things."

Again, Rogers's rhetorical skills enabled him to adapt to the occasion and the audience, so that some of presentations such as lectures and eulogies must have been more subdued than his rousing, inspirational presentations. Rogers gave a eulogy upon the passing of John M. Palmer, who was a member of Rogers's congregation in Springfield and who had been a Union Army General in the Civil War and a one-term governor of Illinois (1868–1872). The full text of this eulogy appears in the *Transactions of the Illinois State Historical Society, 1901*. This eulogy includes a detailed summary of Palmer's life that shows Rogers had thoroughly researched it; and the eulogy is rich in quotations, references to classical literature, and such figurative language as seen in the following passage: "as a lawyer, he [Palmer] was true to his clients and tried each cause for all there was in it. He went to the bottom of things. In his preparation he pitted himself against himself. He was like the German badger dog, he'd hunt reason to its hole and there he'd sit until reason showed itself or else he'd burrow in after it and get it" (*Transactions*, pp. 77–78).

Rogers's speeches about Lincoln were perhaps straightforward lectures without the flair and flourishes he was capable of. Rogers was apparently fond of lecturing about Abraham Lincoln, although no copy of his address for the 1909 Lincoln Centennial Celebration on February 10, 1909, in Lincoln, Illinois, has been found. On Lincoln's birthday, February 12, 1908, Rogers gave a talk on Lincoln titled "Local Memories of Lincoln" to the D.A.R at the home of Abraham Lincoln in Springfield (*Daughters of the American Revolution Magazine*).

One of Rogers's promotional brochures includes an undated blurb from the Champaign Illinois, *Daily Gazette* telling of another of his Lincoln lectures: "With this preliminary, Dr. Rogers brought up to his subject, the Life of Abraham Lincoln, a subject which every man had heard told time after time, under all conditions, and by all kinds of people, but never as Dr. Rogers told it. The story of the life of the greatest man of this country was carefully woven, eloquently presented, and there was not a stir in the whole room until Dr. Rogers had finished, when the silence was broken by an applause which more than made up for all the silence which preceded it." This account suggests that Rogers's speeches about Lincoln were perhaps straightforward lectures without the rhetorical flourishes he was capable of.

Euclid B. Rogers's 1922 Lincoln Address at the Rotary Club of Springfield, Illinois

My research located a short talk about Abraham Lincoln that Rogers gave to the Rotary Club of Springfield, Illinois, on February 13, 1922 (full text in Appendix B). Rogers was 70 when he gave

this speech, and it is only three pages, taking no more than twelve minutes, whereas sermons and Chautauqua presentations would have taken from forty-five minutes to ninety minutes. The Springfield speech is an incisive analysis of Lincoln's qualities rather than a rousing, inspirational performance, and there is very little flowery language.

The speech opens and closes with poetry. The opening poem is three stanzas, and it appears to be an original composition because there is no attribution as there is to the closing quotation from a song. The opening poem describes the birth of Abraham Lincoln, and his cradle is compared to that of Moses, "filled with a nation's hope / And promise of great deeds."

Rogers says he will not offer a biography of Lincoln. The speech concentrates on Lincoln's essential qualities as President, and the first cited is his patience. Rogers describes the turmoil that began Lincoln's presidency: the secessions, the Southern confiscation of Union resources, the ridicule of the press, and the indifference of European nations: "to insult, threat, menace, provocation, hate and treason, he responded by perfect calm and serenity."

Rogers next refers to Lincoln's sense of humor during this tragic period: "And there was a high and holy purpose in all his humor. He was simple, gentle, sympathetic, with healing in the touch of his hands, and yet he had a deep appreciation of the comical and ludicrous. . . ." Lincoln's humor was uplifting.

Rogers acknowledges Lincoln's religious nature, but says Lincoln was reserved and "guarded his inner spiritual life from all intrusions. . . ." Although Rogers was a Baptist minister, he does not refer to Lincoln as a Christian. Yet, many Christian denominations mistakenly tried to claim Lincoln as their own. Neither does Rogers refer to Lincoln as a Christian martyr, although that conception was the earliest interpretation of Lincoln's life associated with the Great Emancipator in the first decades after his assassination. Lincoln biographer David Herbert Donald explains: "Shortly after Lincoln's death there began to appear a veritable flood of affidavits and statements to prove, as Holland put it, that 'Lincoln's power' had been the 'power of a true-hearted Christian man. . . . His assassination at once brought to mind the tender, familiar outlines of the Christ story. Lincoln as 'Savior of his country' was by his death expiating the sins of the nation. . . . Some pointed to the significance of Lincoln's martyrdom on Good Friday" (Donald, "The Folklore Lincoln" in *An Illinois Reader*, p. 251).

Rogers then presents a long quotation from John Bigelow, editor of the *New York Evening Post*, that identifies the source of Lincoln's leadership as morality and faith. Rogers closes by quoting the lyrics of a song of Percy MacKaye (title of the song is unnamed) and by praising the leadership of both Washington and Lincoln.

Conclusions

Lincoln, Illinois, demonstrated its appreciation for its unique namesake heritage with a special program to celebrate the centennial anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth (February 12, 1909). This program, held in the Broadway Theatre on February 10, 1909, consisted of patriotic music, a recitation of the Gettysburg Address, a short talk by Lawrence B. Stringer on the naming of the town, and a speech by the well-known orator and Baptist minister, Euclid B. Rogers of Springfield, Illinois. The nature of this program was appropriate for the size of the city of Lincoln at that time

(population approximately 12,000). At least two people involved in this event had known Mr. Lincoln: W.W. Houser, M.D., one of the planners, and Lewis Rosenthal, one of the special guests.

The *Lincoln Daily Courier* on February 11, 1909, proclaimed Stringer's speech as newsworthy: **"This talk[,] while brief, gave the details of a story of how Lincoln came to have its present name. The story is new in this city and of more than ordinary interest. That is one of the reasons why Mr. Stringer's short talk was unusually enjoyable"** [emphasis mine].

It is a bit puzzling that the newspaper asserted Stringer's story of the town being named after Abraham Lincoln was new. What exactly was new about the story? It seems unlikely that Stringer's 1909 speech would have been the first time that the townspeople learned much of the narrative about the origin of their town—that the town was founded because of the railroad, who the founders were (Latham, Gillett, and Hickox), and that they had named the town for Abraham Lincoln. One of Stringer's main sources of information about the naming of the town was Robert Latham, and Latham died in 1894. For years, then, Stringer had known the story of how the town was named, and it makes no good sense that he would have kept it all a secret until 1909 or that the townspeople would not have heard accounts of their town's founding from other sources of oral history.

The *Lincoln Daily Courier* article, cited above, continues: "They [founders] wanted a charter. They knew that they wanted one of liberal provisions. . . . They asked the man [Lincoln] to do the work and told him among other things, that if he secured for them what the[y] wanted they would honor him by naming the town for him. The man took the job remarking in a diffident way something to the effect that the men certainly would regret having named their future city for him. *He took the job however and secured the charter as the promoters wanted it.*"

Thus, it seems likely that the new element in the history was the detail of the founders naming the town after Abraham Lincoln *specifically as part of a reward (quid pro quo) for his successfully obtaining a generous town charter*. Apparently, Stringer wanted to offer a fresh detail to mark the special occasion of celebrating the centennial of Mr. Lincoln's birth in his first namesake town.

At this point in my research, it is unclear exactly what constituted the town charter and unclear when it was issued. *Stringer's 1911 History does not explicitly state that the founders were naming the town for Abraham Lincoln specifically as a reward for his obtaining a favorable town charter*. Stringer's book says the founders directed Mr. Lincoln "to have contracts drawn for the new site and for the purchase of the land on which it is now situated, as well as for a bill in the Legislature submitting to a vote of the people the question of a removal of the county seat [from Mt. Pulaski] to the proposed townsite" (I, p. 221). Stringer's book says that representative Colby Knapp introduced this bill in the state legislature "providing for a special election to be held in Logan County, at which the legal voters should 'vote for or against the removal of the seat of justice from the town of Mt. Pulaski to the northwest quarter of section thirty-one, township twenty, range two west of the third principal meridian.' The bill was passed and approved Feb. 14, 1853, and provided that the said election should be held at the regular election in November and that the owners of the said quarter section should convey to the county certain lots and grounds for public buildings, in the event the proposition to remove the county seat should carry" (I, p. 566).

Months later, on August 24, 1853, Mr. Lincoln drew up the papers giving Latham power of attorney to "'lay off a town' on the said tract [legal description above] 'to be named Lincoln,' to have

same surveyed and platted and to sell said lots at public or private sale" (p. 567). Stringer notes that the document giving Latham power of attorney is "the first one connected with the laying out of the proposed new town site, which contains the word 'Lincoln' as the name of the town so proposed. Even the Legislative bill submitting the proposition of removal of county seat located the proposed new town by designating the section" (p. 567).

It is debatable whether the bill to re-locate the county seat constituted a town charter or included one, but the legislation passed on February 14, 1853, did implicitly authorize the new town. Also, the description of the geographical location is in the technical language of a surveyor. Of course, Abraham Lincoln was a surveyor, so this description may be evidence that he was involved in writing the bill that the founders directed him to write but which is associated with Colby Knapp.

Stringer's *History of Logan County, Illinois, 1911*, indicates that the founders named the town for Abraham Lincoln not only as gratitude for his collective legal services in helping to found the town but also as a general compliment to him for his fame in central Illinois as a popular personality (famous as a storyteller), well-known lawyer, and public servant. In fact, Stringer's *1911 History* states this "general compliment" motive—and states it twice (p. 221 and p. 567).

Few, if any, people today are familiar with the quid pro quo "reward for charter" theme of Stringer's 1909 speech explaining why the town was named for Abraham Lincoln—something perhaps new in 1909, mostly forgotten, and then again new in 2009! Regardless, telling about the future president's role in naming Lincoln, Illinois, was especially appropriate for the Lincoln Centennial Celebration in Lincoln, Illinois, and that story is a cornerstone in the town's history.

The newspaper report of Stringer's account of Abraham Lincoln being rewarded for effective legal service by having the town named for him refers to Lincoln as an "impecunious lawyer," but that is inaccurate. Between the time Lincoln left Congress in 1849 and his re-entry into politics in 1854, he had a very successful law partnership with William Herndon. Lincoln was hard working, and in the early 1850s, "everywhere on the circuit Lincoln's services were much in demand mostly by younger attorneys who needed his assistance in drafting legal papers and in presenting their cases to the court (Donald, *Lincoln*, p. 147). Lincoln's "law practice brought in a comfortable income. . ." (Donald, *Lincoln*, p. 151). By 1854, Lincoln felt secure enough in his law practice to re-enter politics, and that decision meant having to pay a lot of his own expenses for travel, room, and board.

An analysis of the planners and guests of this celebration provides insight into the social hierarchy and cultural life of this small Midwestern town early in the 20th century. A study of the planners and other participants has revealed their backgrounds, occupations, and values: most of the planners were members of various professions and businessmen. The planners paid special homage to the local citizens who were veterans of the Civil War. Two members of the General Committee had been Union officers in the Civil War and were among those who took blacks to Lincoln, Illinois, after the war. Since then, Lincoln has always had a marginal black population. Apparently, however, no blacks were among the planners or special guests of this celebration; and it is questionable whether any blacks whatsoever attended it.

The absence of blacks at a celebration of Abraham Lincoln would present a special irony, especially when the Gettysburg Address was recited because its famous theme is "a new birth of freedom," which, among other possible meanings, includes the liberation of the slaves.

Judges ranked at the top of the social ladder, and they were followed in rank order by clergymen, leaders in such other professions as education and medicine, and prominent businessmen. No women were named to the General Committee or special guest list, but females were named to the Decorations Committee, including Mrs. John A. Lutz, one of Lincoln's most prominent citizens. The Lincoln namesake town Centennial Celebration shows that several organizers and participants were active in community service and the Chautauqua movement, which was becoming increasingly popular in the first decade of the 20th century.

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Notes: The title "Lincoln at 100 at Lincoln" reads the same forward and backward. That peculiar phrasing is called a palindrome. The various articles from newspapers in Lincoln, Illinois, about the first Lincoln namesake town's Lincoln Centennial Celebration (1909) are courtesy of Mr. Richard Sumrall and Ms. Joyce Sutz of the Lincoln Public Library, and I am especially grateful for their contributions. These articles provided the names of key individuals that enabled me to do further research leading to the present article. Mr. Sumrall and Ms. Sutz also provided the Chautauqua program seen in Appendix C. The Web site links (URLs) in the PDF version work, but you may have to close other windows in order to access them. Email D. Leigh Henson at DLHenson@missouristate.edu.

Caution: I tried to set the hyperlinks so that they would open in a new window that could be closed without closing the PDF reader, but that did not work. To avoid closing the PDF reader when you exit a webpage accessed with a hyperlink in this PDF, place your cursor on the hyperlink, right click on the link, and choose and click on Open Link in New Private Window.

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Appendix A: Financial Report on the Lincoln Namesake City Centennial Celebration

On February 16, 1909, the *Lincoln Daily News Herald* published the following account of the Lincoln Centennial Celebration in the city of Lincoln: "Morris Emmerson, as custodian of the funds subscribed for the expenses of the Lincoln centennial celebration in this city on the 10th makes report to the committee as follows: Total amount received from all sources. . . .\$92.50.

Paid out:

Dr. Euclid Rogers for address and expenses	\$32.00
Gullett & Sons, flowers, telegrams, etc.	6.00
John A. Simpson, decorating committee	1.20
McGrath & Braucher, chairs	3.00
Becker & Company	1.00
Homer Alvey, opera house rental	27.00
Dr. Otis A. Smith, telephone service reserved.	<u>1.00</u>
Total . . .	\$71.20
Balance in hand of Emmerson	\$21.30

"It is not often that the treasury shows a balance of cash on hand after the expense of a public celebration. It is up to the committee what disposition shall be made of the \$21.30."

Appendix B

The following speech is cited in Jay Monaghan's *Lincoln Bibliography, 1839–1939*, #2601, Illinois State Historical Society, 1945:

Lincoln
At the **ROTARY CLUB**
 Springfield, Illinois
February 13, 1922

LINCOLN

An Address by ROTARIAN EUCLID B. ROGERS

At the dinner of the Rotary Club of Springfield, Illinois, on the evening of Monday, February 13, 1922, President Roy Cogswell said: "This is a legal holiday in memory of the birth of Abraham Lincoln and I think it well for us to recognize the fact, and so I ask Rotarian Euclid B. Rogers to say a word."

The appropriate response of Dr. Rogers is presented on the following pages:

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

"A house of logs, low, windowless and small,
Fireplace of stones and clay;
Stick-chimney queer, one southward-open door
For light and cheer of day.

A slender woman, young, in homespun garb,
A man-child bending o'er,
Within a lowly cradle gently rocked
Upon the earthen floor.

A cradle rude, God's basket, like the ark
That lay among the reeds
Upon the Nile, filled with a nation's hope
And promise of great deeds."

So his birth, Feb. 12, 1809.

I shall not rehearse the familiar story of his life. Was he a man of patience and of poise? I appeal to the history of the early 60's: The President whom he succeeded had surrendered to the slave holders of the South the arsenals of the Republic, the skeletons of her army, her fleets, practically all her resources. Anarchy, discord, treason everywhere. Hundreds of journals launching daily insult and outrage upon him: ridiculing his plans, taxing him with feebleness and imbecility, and exalting the talents and resources of the insurrectionists. And what were foreign nations doing? France, renouncing the glorious memories of the 18th century, was holding out her imperial hand to the South, and by creating the Mexican Empire, was conspiring to overthrow the Republic. England held herself aloof, an impassive and cynical spectator of what she believed to be the inevitable destruction of the Union. And there stood Lincoln breasting the full tide of oceanic hate. To insult, threat, menace, provocation, hate and treason, he responded by perfect calm and serenity, possessing his great soul in patience, and that's man's highest victory.

A man of sorrows and acquainted with grief was Lincoln, and yet none loved laughter more than he, and few have left a nobler legacy of clean wit over which men may laugh both well

and wisely. And there was a high and holy purpose in all his humor. He was simple, gentle, sympathetic, with healing in the touch of his hands, and yet he had a deep appreciation of the comical and ludicrous, and they played shadow-games in the chambers of his life, and these shadow-folk took from him many a pain, and spread for him many a festival, and spoke to him of the morrow that would surely be.

Religious, was he that? Yes. True, he surrounded his own secret life with a reserve hard to penetrate, and no man could criticise that reserve, because in all his public work he poured out his very soul in utter abandon, but he guarded his inner spiritual life from all intrusion, treating it as Lyman Abbott said of Phillips Brooks, "as a Holy of Holies." The heart of him leaned up ag'st the Mighty God of his heart, and the hand of him felt for the leading hand of the All-Father, and the soul of him trusted and adored. Forgetting himself, effacing all tho't of self, he gained possession of his great personality by losing it. The problem of the religious life? Here you have it: To develop personality to the highest point, to forget it, and finally to regain it by identifying it with great causes, noble forces and commanding convictions, and that was Lincoln.

In this connection I cite you the fighting editor of the New York Evening Post, author, diplomat, in the thick of affairs, that human fountain of sanely directed energy, that lover of truth, a seeker for the Heavenly Wisdom more than for hidden treasure, Mr. John Bigelow. Said he: "The greatness of Lincoln must be sought for in the constituents of his moral nature. The issues presented to the people at the Presidential election in 1860 were, to a larger extent, moral questions, humanly speaking, than were those presented at any other Presidential election. Looking back upon the Administration, and upon all the blunders which from a worldly point of view Lincoln and his advisers seemed to have made, and then pausing to consider the results of that Administration, we realize that we had what, above all things we most needed, a President who walked by faith, and not by sight; who did not rely upon his own compass, but followed a cloud by day and a fire by night, which he had learned to trust implicitly."

And how tall and stately his form and fame! The men who would not defile their lips with his name, men who would have slain him, have taught their children the pathway to his tomb.

Lincoln: warm, golden letters that will never lose their luster till the heart stands still.

Washington—Lincoln. How fortunate we to have two such national heroes! No nation on earth has two such. Our history runs through fewer pages than any other. The splendors of antiquity are not ours, but if two short centuries have given us two such monumental ideals, what shall a millenium of steady, stately progress bestow! Happy our successors who walk thro the corridors of our Hall of Fame in that great day that is yet to be!

As Percy MacKaye recently sang:

“Empire is ours—but not of tribes
Eating our culture at command;
Gospel is ours—but not for Scribes
And Pharisees to sell and brand.

Splendor is ours—the priceless dome
Of the Eternal City—ours;
The Eternal City is not Rome.
No, nor Manhattan’s Babel towers.

But where Mt. Vernon shadows fall
Glimmers its silent Parthenon.
And on its cabined Capitol
A wood-thrush sings by the Sangamon.”

As in this city 80 years ago Lincoln said of Washington, so say I of both Washington and Lincoln: “In solemn awe pronounce the names and in their naked, deathless splendor leave them shining on.”

Upon motion of Rotarian Hal Smith, the Club voted to have the short address printed.



The above text was scanned from the original document's pages. The document was obtained from the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield, Illinois.

Appendix C

The Lincoln Chautauqua

BRAINERD PARK
LINCOLN, ILLINOIS

• • •

Seventh Annual Assembly

AUGUST 12-25, 1908



Officers

E. G. KING, PRESIDENT
C. E. GULLETT, SECRETARY
J. E. HOBLIT, TREASURER

• • •

Directors

E. G. KING	T. L. BLACKBURN	L. B. STRINGER
P. E. KUHL	ANDREW LAYMAN	JAMES E. HOBLIT
HENRY BOYD	JOSEPH LANDAUER	C. H. TURNER
C. E. GULLETT		D. H. HARTS, JR.



PRESS OF
THE DAILY NEWS-HERALD
LINCOLN, ILLINOIS
1908

THE LINCOLN CHAUTAUQUA.

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- 4:00 Physical Culture Hour—"A Talk to Young Ladies," Prof. Wallace.
 5:00 Dress Parade—Decatur Cadets.
 7:30 Prelude—Farewell appearance of Miss Dodds.
 8:15 Grand Concert—The Only Dunbar Company—Old Friends.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 22.

- 9:00 Devotional Service.
 9:00 Boys' and Girls' Clubs, Prof. Wallace.
 10:00 Chorus Rehearsal—Mr. and Mrs. Starr.
 11:00 Morning Company Drill—Decatur Cadets.
 1:45 Prelude—The Dunbar Company.
 2:30 Lecture Recital—"Plantation Days in Song and Story," Paul M. Pearson.
 4:00 Physical Culture Talk—"Some Facts Worth Knowing Physically," Prof. Wallace.
 8:00 Concert—The Dunbar Company.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 23—GEORGE R. WENDLING.

- 9:30 Sunday School—President James H. McMurray in charge.
 10:30 Religious Services—Sermon by Dr. Euclid B. Rogers, Springfield, Illinois; choir conducted by Mr. Starr.
 1:30 Prelude—Schildkret's Hungarian Orchestra.
 2:30 Lecture—"The Man of Galilee," Hon. George R. Wendling, Washington, D. C.
 4:00 Sacred Concert—Schildkret's Hungarian Orchestra.
 7:30 Sacred Concert—Schildkret's Hungarian Orchestra and Mr. Starr.

MONDAY, AUGUST 24.

- 9:00 Devotional Service.
 9:00 Boys' and Girls' Clubs—Final rehearsal for public entertainment.
 10:00 Chorus Rehearsal—Mr. and Mrs. Starr.
 11:00 Morning Drill—Decatur Cadets.
 1:45 Prelude—Schildkret's Hungarian Orchestra.
 2:30 Grand Entertainment by the Boys' and Girls' Clubs, directed by Prof. Kirke Earle Wallace; accompaniment by Schildkret's Hungarian Orchestra.
 4:00 Battalion Drill—Decatur Cadets.
 7:30 Concert by Schildkret's Hungarian Orchestra.

TUESDAY, AUGUST 25—GOV. J. FRANK HANLY.

- 9:00 Devotional Service.
 9:00 Boys' and Girls' Clubs—Farewell session, Prof. Wallace.
 10:00 Final Chorus Rehearsal—Mr. and Mrs. Starr.
 11:00 Morning Drill—Decatur Cadets.
 1:45 Prelude—Schildkret's Hungarian Orchestra.
 2:30 Lecture—"The Spirit of Democracy," Gov. J. Frank Hanly, of Indiana.
 4:30 Dress Parade—Decatur Cadets.
 7:30 Opera Night—Grand Farewell Entertainment, directed by Mr. Wilbur Starr, and accompanied by Schildkret's Hungarian Orchestra, presenting Gilbert & Sullivan's Operetta, "Trial by Jury."