

Introduction

THE INTRODUCTION to the 1958 edition of the Wisconsin Blue Book contained a recital of the evolution of this publication which has been issued under that title since 1878. While the general outline of the Blue Book has been fairly stable for many years, its preparation is by no means a routine task because of the constant changes in the governmental process in Wisconsin. Departments rise and fall; functions are created and abolished; staff is hired and released. Were the Blue Book a picture of Wisconsin state government on January 1 of even years when copy is to be in the printer's hands, it would begin to be out of date on January 2.

Not only is state government stable for but a moment, but its evolution lags behind the authority to make change. An agency created by law today may not become a full-blown entity for some time. Its components may unfold at a barely perceptible rate. Its objectives may be translated into a working program only after a period of exploration. Appointments may be held in abeyance; bills which affect the organization and operation of state government may require months to become effective after approval by both houses of the legislature. Thus the editors of the Blue Book are confronted perpetually with the problems of accuracy and of currency. Accuracy is an attainable goal; currency is not. The lag between the submission of the copy and the date of publication precludes the inclusion of the most recent changes.

For some years the editors have sought to bring together each biennium the data on a significant segment of state government in a comprehensive main article. The 1960 edition of the Blue Book follows this trend with an article incorporating a biographical sketch of each of the 34 men who held the office of Governor between 1848 and 1958. Each sketch is accompanied by a photograph of what is, or is purported to be, the official portrait of the Governor involved except in the case of Acting Governor MacArthur of whom no portrait exists. It is hoped that these highlights in the

lives of the men who gained the post of chief executive of the state will prove a source of enjoyment and information for those who use this book.

Chapter 516, Laws of 1959, clarifies the distribution of the 45,000 copies of the Blue Book, among other things. It is clear that this book was intended as a source of ready reference for the public official, businessman, homemaker, teacher and student. Roughly one copy for every 100 people in the state is provided. This means that unless the available copies are distributed widely and used effectively many will be denied access to a copy. Public libraries, schools and most public officials have copies, and individuals who do not benefit from the broad distribution made each biennium may purchase a copy from the state at a nominal price.

The preparation of each edition of the Blue Book is possible only through the co-operative efforts of a host of people including key staff members of the operating departments, the Printing Division of the Bureau of General Services and the staff of the Legislative Reference Library. Although the major direction in the compilation of the 1960 edition was given by Mrs. Hazel Kuehn, librarian of the Legislative Reference Library, the 1960 version of the volume represents greater participation by more members of the Legislative Reference Library staff than ever before.

Special recognition is given to Gerald L. Matthews for the title page illustrations; the Melrose Music Corporation and Broadcast Music, Incorporated, for permission to reproduce the music to "On Wisconsin" in the frontispiece; to Paul Vanderbilt, curator of the iconographic collections of the Wisconsin Historical Society for his assistance in locating the portraits of the former Governors; the Photographic Laboratory of the University of Wisconsin for photographing these portraits; and to Dr. Roy Lokken for his assistance in gathering the data upon which the biographic sketches of the former Governors were based.

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