Book Reviews


As Professors York Willbern and Karl O'Lessker point out in their introductory essay in this book, Matthew E. Welsh's governorship can lay just claim to special significance in the recent history of Indiana for substantial accomplishments in such areas as civil rights, educational reorganization, and the restructuring of state finances. Moreover, the popular Democratic governor's success in carrying out a relatively liberal legislative program was achieved in the face of a divided legislature and a Republican lieutenant governor in a state rightfully regarded as wedded to a tradition of conservative politics. Thus Welsh's memoir of his years in office comes as a particularly welcome source for the study of the state's recent political history. For the most part it is a modestly stated, straightforward account, perhaps rather blander than might be expected in its treatment of some of the controversies of the time, but generally informative and even insightful. The memoir is especially good in showing how the governor owed much of his effectiveness in getting legislation passed to his patience, his unshakably moderate stance, and his prior experience as both a representative and senator in six sessions of the Indiana General Assembly.

In many ways the most interesting passages are the initial and the final sections, which deal respectively with the gubernatorial campaign in 1960 and the presidential primary race four years later. The first is a lively account, written with the assistance of campaign aide Richard Martin, of how Welsh secured the Democratic gubernatorial nomination and went on to an upset victory over his Republican opponent in an election in which the GOP won all but one of the remaining state offices and Richard Nixon rang up a resounding majority over John Kennedy in the contest for Indiana's electoral vote. In the last section Welsh collaborates with James McManus, his news aide, in telling the often dramatic story of his successful campaign to defeat Alabama governor George Wallace's presidential bid by standing in for Lyndon Johnson on the 1964 Indiana primary ballot.

Throughout the volume the former governor is careful to share credit for what was achieved with other members of his
administrative team, and he adds at the close a series of brief vignettes on the activities and leadership of the various executive branches. Eight appendixes contain useful statistical tables as well as short narratives by two of Welsh’s close associates, Democratic legislative leader S. Hugh Dillin and Donald Foltz, director of the Department of Conservation; also included is a list of state and county officers of both the Democratic and Republican parties during the years 1961-1964. Although one might wish for more intimate revelations of the governor’s mind and spirit, historians of Indiana can indeed be grateful for the publication of this memoir.

DePauw University, Greencastle, Ind. Clifton J. Phillips


Pictorial histories of American cities are hardy perennials for bookstore windows, public library shelves, and coffee tables. The last decade has brought coast-to-coast series from at least three publishing houses, in addition to numerous one-time efforts.

The present volume on Indianapolis is an example of the genre at its best. George W. Geib, as senior author, contributes a narrative of growth and continuity in the evolution of Indianapolis. His readable survey of the city touches on the high points of politics, the evolving employment base, and the growth of public institutions. It also provides a capsule summary of the changing face of downtown and the life cycle of Indianapolis neighborhoods. Outside readers will be struck by the degree to which land use in Indianapolis has recapitulated the typical American urban pattern. Unlike much local history, which often bogs down with the pioneer generation, Indianapolis gives more emphasis to the emerging metropolis of the twentieth century than to the struggling town and small city of the nineteenth.

The illustrations also make a major contribution. The historical material includes reproductions of maps and documents as well as old photographs and drawings. Timothy Peterson, the historical photography editor, drew most of the material from the collections of the Indiana Historical Society, but he also tapped corporate collections, newspaper files, and other public institutions. The book includes more than fifty contemporary photographs by Darryl Jones.