

FOREWORD

This edition of the *Maryland Manual* continues a long tradition of providing for the Legislature, State agencies, the people of Maryland, and others interested in the Free State an extensive survey of the offices, officers, functions, and services provided by government at the State, county, and local level. The first *Maryland Manual*, compiled by Elihu S. Riley, appeared in 1896 with the maxim, "What Is News To-Day is History To-Morrow," printed on the title page. The historical importance of the *Maryland Manual* is often overshadowed by its role as the primary source of information concerning the present organization of State government. Now that the book is ready for the printer and is as current as modern technology can make it, we should reflect briefly on Riley's concern that the *Maryland Manual* be recognized not only as a status report and directory of practical information, but also as a permanent record of the personalities and performance of the individuals and agencies that as a whole form the complex fabric of Maryland State government.

Elihu Riley's *Maryland Manual* for 1896 is a remarkable historical document, not only for facts that today are obscure but also for its nineteenth-century perception of the important elements in a public official's career. The opening pages consist of a biography of Governor Lloyd Lowndes of Cumberland, Allegany County, presumably written with the assistance of the governor himself. Were it not for this first *Maryland Manual* it would be difficult, perhaps impossible, for the historian or political scientist of today to ferret out the details of Governor Lowndes's early education, or establish that he attained a "large and lucrative" law practice shortly after graduation from college, or determine that he married his cousin, Miss Elizabeth Lowndes, daughter of Richard T. Lowndes, who bore him five sons and a daughter. Perusing the lengthy biographies of members of the General Assembly compiled by Riley, one learns that the Speaker of the House, Sydney E. Mudd, a Republican, was the son of a "prosperous farmer of Charles County," and that he was so popular that in his campaign for reelection to the House of Representatives in 1890 he was victorious despite the fact that "this was the year of the great Democratic tidal wave." Family connections and distinguished lineage were a matter of concern to Riley. Of Senator Thomas A. Smith of Caroline County, for example, Riley wrote that his father was a "member of the Smith family of Delaware, among whom have been some of Delaware's most representative and useful citizens." Senator Frank C. Norwood is described as a "native of Frederick County, where his ancestors have lived for more than a century. . . . His family comes of English stock, and has been identified with Maryland since the early history of the State." Perhaps the most notable American ancestry could be claimed by Delegate J. Winslow Jones, however, who was "on the Winslow side . . . a descendant of Canelm, brother to Gov. Edward Winslow, who came over in the Mayflower."

Less illustrious antecedents—even outright poverty—were not insurmountable barriers to participation in Maryland politics in the late-nineteenth century, however, and Riley carefully recorded the instances where public office had been bestowed by the electorate on self-made men. Senator James M. Sloan of Allegany County, for example, had moved to Lonaconing with his parents at an early age, and when his father, "who had been an invalid for some time," died leaving James and an older brother to "support a large family," the twelve-year-old future senator went to work in the coal mines. Although Senator Elihu E. Jackson of Wicomico County is described as being the son of "a hardworking and fairly prosperous farmer," Riley records that Elihu and his four brothers and two sisters were required to do "their share of the customary labor" on their father's farm, work that in a more prosperous household in antebellum Maryland would have most probably been done by slaves. Delegate Frank Porter of Allegany County developed a love of "good reading and study" despite his "never seeing the inside of a school house until twelve years of age," and even then he "could only be spared from the farm during the inclement winter months." Reminiscent of many of our own fathers' tales of the hardships of rural education, Riley records that when Porter was allowed to attend school he "had to walk six (6) miles a day over mountain roads."

Although this *Manual* undoubtedly lacks the charm and familiarity of Riley's 1896 *Manual*, it does serve more than a transitory purpose. The editorial comments of Riley have been replaced by what we hope is more objective reporting on State government. We refrain from assessments of a delegate's "decided views on the liquor question and bribery at elections," and that he "would like to see improvement in the laws governing both." Biographies are brief and factual. Instead of enlarging on the personalities of public officials, we concentrate on descriptions of legislative committees and of executive