

100 MOMENTS

BIRTH OF A BUREAU

By Larry Sauer (1989-2006)

Prior to the creation of the Bureau of Criminal Investigation the governor of Iowa, George W. Clark, was authorized in 1915 to appoint not more than four special agents. Their duties, under the direction of the governor, were to aid in the capture, detention, arrest, and prosecution of persons committing crime or violating the laws of the state. The agents selected for these positions were Oscar O. Rock, H.M. Long, C. Campbell, and Roscoe Sannders. These special agents had full law enforcement authority throughout the state.

The salary of these early agents was set by the governor as approved by the State Executive Council. They also received reimbursements for expenses incurred in discharging their duties. At the time of this 1919 legislation, not more than one Special Agent could be employed for a period of more than thirty days without the consent of the executive council.

A new spirit of cooperation between state and local officials now existed and officers were enthusiastically working together to solve crime like never before. By the end of 1916, four hundred bootleggers and one hundred gamblers had been arrested and twenty-five other persons

ATTORNEY GENERAL BEN J. GIBSON

"I am firmly convinced that enforcement of law can never be accomplished until there is cooperation of effort and purpose between the citizens, the local authorities and the state government."

list of special state peace officers. They were H.M. Stoner of Oelwein, Oscar O. Rock of Logan, C.M. Hanson of Des Moines, H.M. Long of Bedford, C. Campbell of Fairfield, and Roscoe Sannders of Manilla. All but Stoner and Hanson had been working as the first special agents under the governor prior to the creation of the Bureau. Hanson was a Polk County deputy sheriff at the time.

The appointment of these agents took effect on March 1, 1921, No salary was set for the agents

had been sent to prison. In April of 1917, additional law enforcement legislation made the continued centralization of authority possible.

On February 26, 1921, Attorney General Ben Gibson announced his



ATTORNEY GENERAL BEN GIBSON
(1921-1927)

but instead they were paid by the day for the time they were engaged as state peace officers. Oscar O. Rock was appointed as acting chief.

Attorney General Gibson was quoted, *"I am firmly convinced that enforcement of law can never be accomplished until there is cooperation of effort and purpose between the citizens, the local authorities and the state government."*

A \$25,000 budget for the special agent staff was allocated for universal law enforcement assistance whenever Governor William L. Harding or Attorney General Havner called for it.

A new spirit of cooperation between state and local officials now existed and officers were enthusiastically working together to solve crime like never. By the end of 1916, four

hundred bootleggers and one hundred gamblers had been arrested and twenty-five other persons had been sent to prison. In April of 1917, additional law enforcement legislation made the continued centralization of authority possible.

On April 9, 1921, Attorney General Gibson was given authority to establish the Bureau of Criminal Investigation. The BCI was designed as a service organization to cooperate and supplement local law officers in major criminal cases when local officials requested BCIs assistance. It directed that the officers of the Bureau would be peace officers as provided by code the legislature initially allocated a \$37,500 budget for the BCI during the first year. This legislation also gave the Attorney General authority to appoint a chief to lead the Bureau. Of major concern to the BCI were crimes against persons, such as suspected homicides,

unexpected deaths, felonious assaults, and rapes. However, in the early years of the BCI, they received widespread press attention for numerous crackdowns on liquor and gambling prosecutions.

The BCI, under the Department of Justice and operating through Attorney General Ben J.

Gibson's office, consolidated all state law officers who were appointed by the Governor and the Attorney General into one centralized law enforcement agency.



CHIEF OSCAR ROCK (1921-1924)

LARRY SAUER - 2021

Larry is the current enjoying his well-deserved retirement. In 1989, after 12 years with the Iowa State Patrol, Larry was sworn in as a Special Agent assigned to General Criminal in Sioux City. After Sioux City, Larry served as Special Agent in the Intelligence Bureau, Special Agent in Charge for Professional Standards Bureau and as the Executive Officer to the Commissioner. After retiring as from the sworn ranks in 2006, Larry returned to work for the DPS in the Governor's Traffic Safety Bureau and the Division of Intelligence, where he worked until officially retiring in 2013. Larry is the father of current Special Agent Matt Sauer.