

## WISCONSIN RAPIDS

*By Bernard T. Ziegler, Manager Wisconsin Rapids Chamber of Commerce*

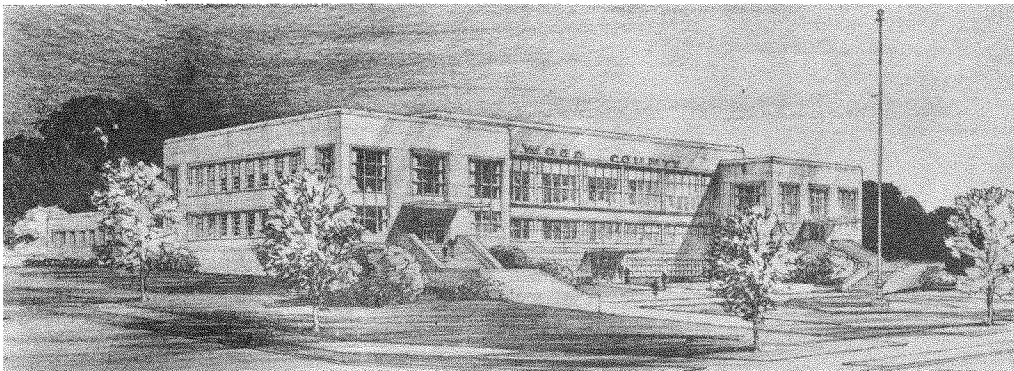
Wisconsin Rapids, the county seat of Wood County, is situated in the geographical center of the state. The city is a consolidation of the two early towns of Grand Rapids and Centralia, the former lying on the east side of the river and the latter on the west. The consolidation was effective in the spring of 1900 and the city subsequently bore the name of Grand Rapids until 1920, when its name was changed on account of freight and mail intended for it being frequently sent by mistake to Grand Rapids, Michigan. The river is here interspersed with a number of small islands, and in passing the city has a descent of about 45 feet over an irregular and rocky bed. It furnishes a splendid water power which is utilized to good advantage by the large paper mills located here. Both above and below the city it presents many picturesque scenes. The Indians gave to this place the name of Ah-dah-wah-gam, meaning the "Two-sided Rapids," as the rapids here were divided into two by a great boulder.

Wisconsin Rapids is situated on four railways: The

Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul, the Chicago & Northwestern, the Green Bay & Western, and the Minneapolis, St. Paul & Sault Ste. Marie, commonly called the "Soo." It is also on Highways Nos. 13, 34, 54 and 73, which connect with other highways to every part of the state.

The city lies in the heart of the paper manufacturing industry, having large paper mills within the city and the surrounding territory, besides which a number of other factories of various kinds (stoves, clothing, toys, plastics, paints) give evidence of a strong industrial life. Situated moreover, in a dairy, livestock raising and diversified farming community, and also near to extensive cranberry raising tracts, its commercial trade is drawn from a wide and rich area.

The first settlers to make improvements of a permanent and progressive nature arrived in 1838 and from then to the present time the community has experienced a steady growth to the point where it now is one of the fastest growing and most modern cities of its size in the state.



NEW WOOD COUNTY COURT HOUSE — CONSTRUCTED IN 1956