

New York State
American Revolution
Bicentennial Commission

Third Annual Report: 1971-1972

The New York State
American Revolution
Bicentennial Commission

JOHN H. G. PELL
Chairman

E. K. FRETWELL, JR.
Vice Chairman

Walter Averill, II	Nathan S. Langdon
John C. Baker	H. Bert Mack
Mary Biondi	I. Frank Mogavero
J. Moreau Brown	Dalwin J. Niles
Laman H. Bruner	Joseph Verner Reed, Jr.
Jane des Grange	Nicholas M. Pette
Laura G. Ebell	Seth Spellman
Robert A. Fusco	Mildred F. Taylor
Guy A. Graves	Frederick P. Todd
Otto E. Koegel	

LOUIS LEONARD TUCKER
Executive Director

Office:

Office of State History
State Education Department
99 Washington Avenue
Albany, New York 12210

On the cover: This colonial doorway graces the hotel reputedly owned by George Washington's Delaware River ferryman, William McConkey. It is now a private residence at Glen, New York. Photo by David Thurheimer.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY, NELSON A. ROCKEFELLER, Governor of the State of New York, and the Honorable Members of the Senate and Assembly:

Pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 630 of the Laws of 1968, the New York State American Revolution Bicentennial Commission hereby respectfully submits its Third Annual Report.

JOHN H. G. PELL
Chairman

E. K. FRETWELL, JR.
Vice Chairman

March 1, 1972

THIRD ANNUAL REPORT: 1971-1972

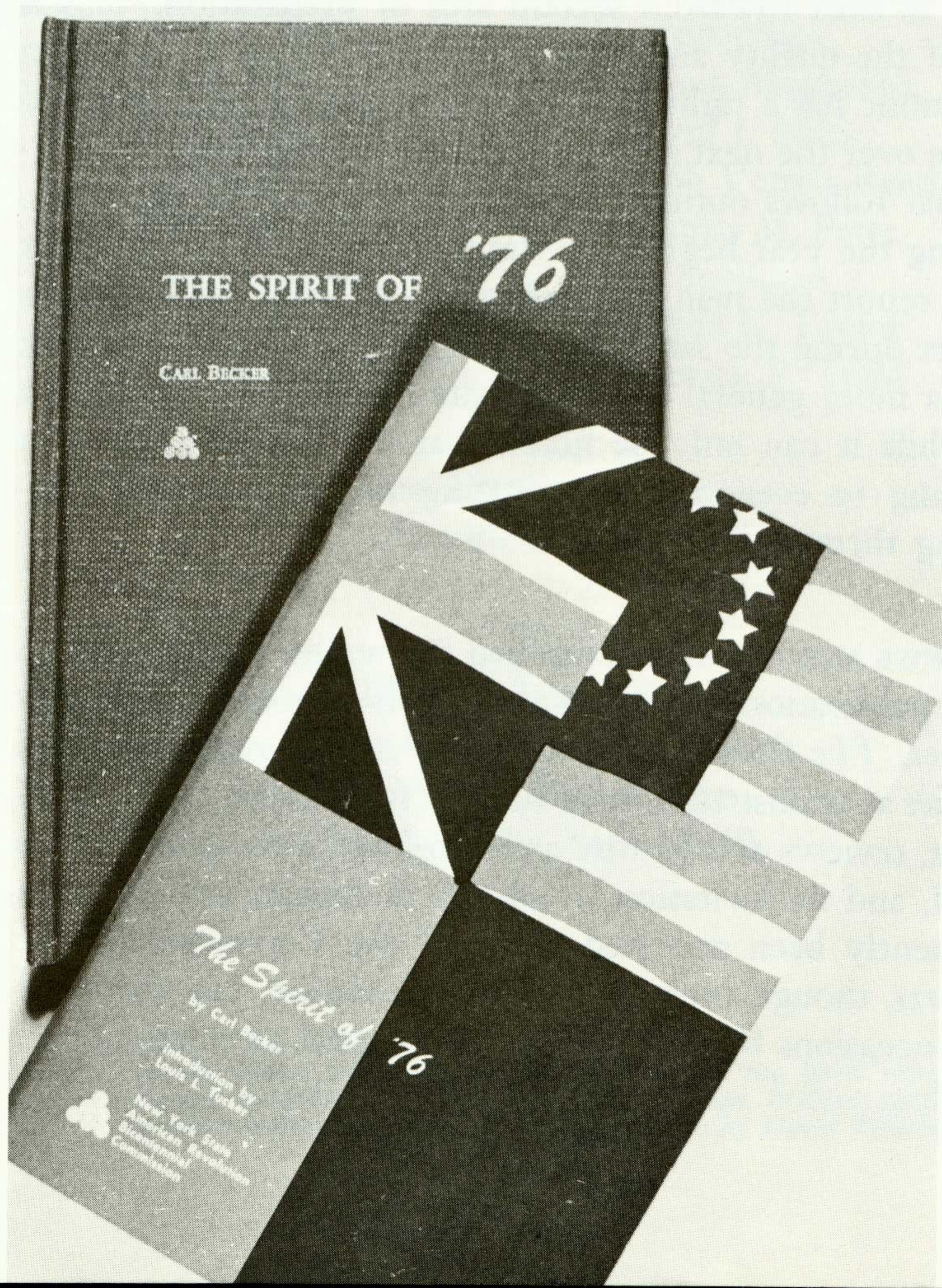
THE YEAR PAST HAS BEEN one of preparation for the bicentennial in at least two important ways. First has been the task of winning the public's attention to the basic fact that the bicentennial is rapidly approaching, and that the State of New York intends to do something about it. Establishing both the event and the intention to honor it comes first. During the course of the past year it has become clear to the Commission that this much has been virtually accomplished. While a public of 18,000,000 individuals will still require frequent reminders, the Commission has begun to shift toward a second area of preparation. This is the development of the quality and variety of observances the occasion deserves and the public has a right to expect. A sustained application of energies and talents over the next several years will be required.

The report that follows outlines the record primarily of the Commission's role during the year beginning March 1, 1971. By its nature it cannot adequately report the many contributions of other organizations to the overall effort during the same period. Such contributions deserve to be included in a more general review of the bicentennial effort at a later date. Meanwhile it can only be noted that the response has been extremely heartening to everyone participating in this mutually supportive undertaking throughout the State.

BICENTENNIAL NEWS AND IDEAS have reached the widest public through the Commission's publications, and most regularly through its 6-page quarterly newsletter, *The Correspondent*, which is now requiring press runs of 15,000 copies as against 10,000 for the first issue in late 1970. With its balance of news, reviews and feature articles, *The Correspondent* has been well received, and its invitation to editors to reprint articles from its pages has frequently been accepted. Each of the Commission's first two *Annual Reports*, though more limited in circulation, has also been quoted on several occasions by publications of national circulation.

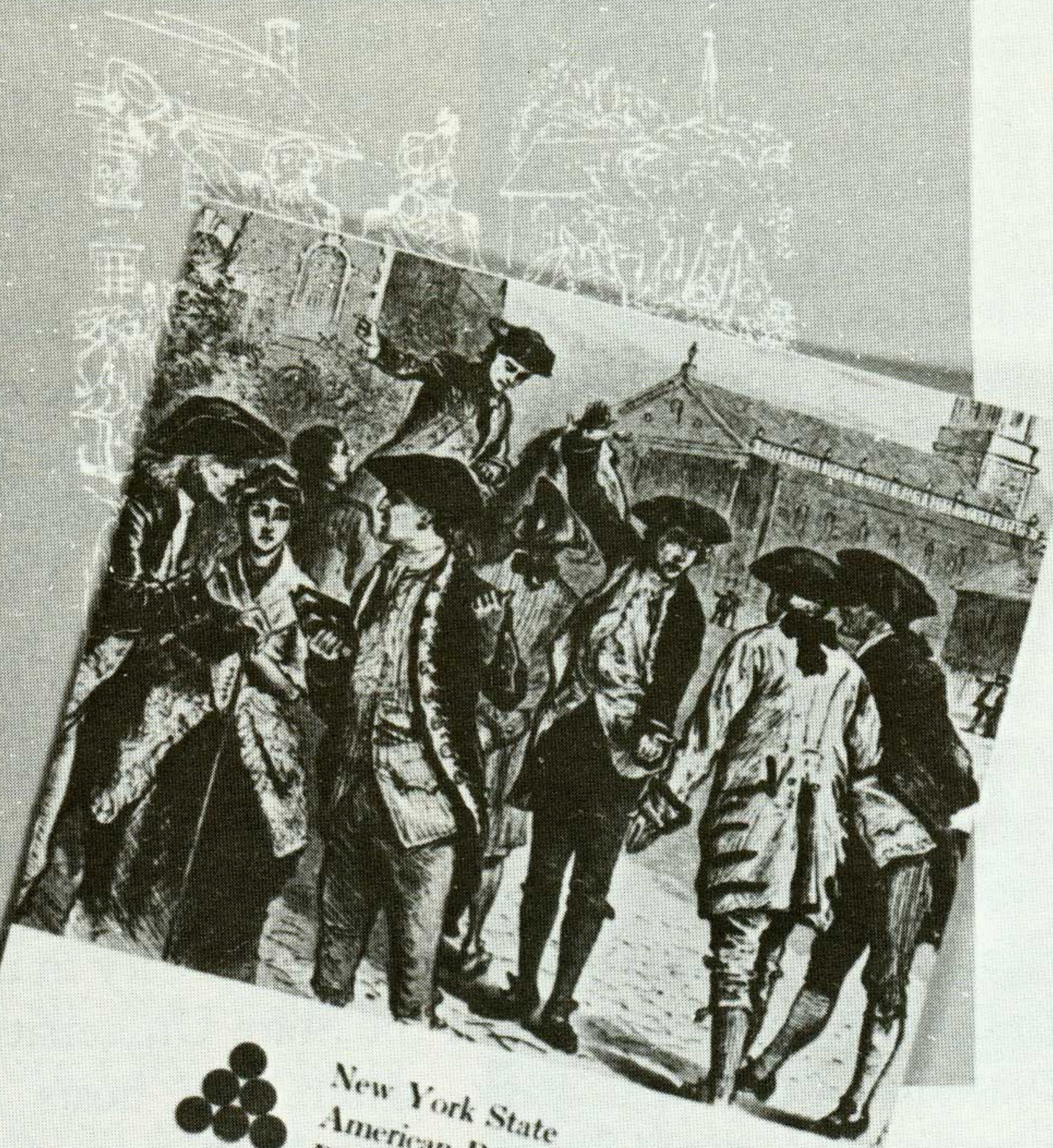
Two special publications have appeared over the Commission's imprint in 1971. A reprint of Carl Becker's *The Spirit of '76*, with a new introduction by Louis L. Tucker, was issued in a small cloth-bound edition for libraries in October and in a larger paper-bound edition this January. Since its first appearance in 1927 in a volume of essays, this fictionalized narrative of the agonies of one New Yorker's decision for independence has long been appreciated by a small readership, but it has never before been separately printed.

The American Revolution for Young Readers, A Bibliography, lists 119 books currently in print and gives a brief note on the contents and recommended grade level of each. Designed as a guide for librarians and schools, it has been distributed free to them throughout the State. A supplementary list is projected for 1976 if, as expected, the need develops.



THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION FOR YOUNG READERS

A Bibliography



New York State
American Revolution
Bicentennial Commission

Second Annual Report: 1970-1971

Efforts to awaken interest in the bicentennial through publications and publicity have not been limited to books. Staff-written newspaper feature articles have been sent to editors and are being well received with full-page, illustrated layouts. Their themes — including Jane McCrea, William McConkey, the Knox Trail, and others — are such that they may be used at an editor's option over a period of time.

Calls on the staff for public appearances have mounted as local and specialized groups turn their attention to bicentennial themes. The Executive Director has made twenty presentations over the past year at national meetings, on television, at colleges, and before patriotic, civic, and service organizations. The Program Coordinator has spoken eighteen times before meetings held from Cattaraugus to Whitehall and Tarrytown. They and other staff members have also attended frequent

planning and working meetings with individuals and groups active on bicentennial projects.

FOLLOWING THE FIRST REGIONAL FORUM on bicentennial planning held at Hofstra University in February, 1971, two similar meetings have been sponsored and a fourth is planned for Utica in March. The Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society was the site of a forum on June 5, attracting representatives from organizations in eight western counties; the Roberson Center in Binghamton gathered together a similar group from the Southern Tier on November 13. These are programs designed for listening by Commission members and staff as well as for talking, and their effectiveness has assured their continuation in the coming year.

The Commission's regular quarterly meetings have also served to bring outside viewpoints to its attention. Guests from the New York State Historic Trust have attended regularly and others occasionally. Meetings have been held in New York City in the 7th Regiment Armory, in Buffalo on the campus of the State University College, and at Saratoga National Historical Park, where the hosts were the National Park Service and the Old Saratoga Historical Association. Between each full Commission meeting, the Executive Committee has met at least once, and more frequently as business has required. Such special committees as that on films, chaired by Col. Frederick P. Todd, on publicity, under Walter Averill II, and on medallions, headed by J. Moreau Brown, have also been meeting, corresponding, and reporting with regularity. Mr. Brown has also represented the Commission at several meetings of the Bicentennial Council of the 13 Original States.

In common with the original states, New York dates its own constitutional beginnings from the period of the Revolution. Observances of the 200th birthday of the State have been recognized as a responsibility of the Commission in legislation passed in 1971, and planning for this occasion has begun within the Commission and its staff.

From the beginning it has been a part of the Commission's plan to use the film medium of publication. Guidelines describing the requirements of an appropriate 25-minute color film were sent out by the Film Committee to a list of New York State producers known to be interested and capable, with an invitation to submit preliminary proposals. From the six submissions, that of Quest Productions of New York City was

chosen for the development of a fuller treatment on contract. This is now in preparation under the direction of William Jersey and Dale Bell, and will be submitted to the Commission for a production contract in the coming year.

COMMEMORATIVE MEDALLIONS TO MARK the occasion of the bicentennial have been a part of the Commission's original plans attracting wide interest. An open design competition is being held for two official medals commemorating the bicentennial in New York State and in New York City. Both medals are jointly sponsored by the American Numismatic Society and will be produced under contract by the Medallion Art Company of New York City. Judging of designs by a panel of seven experts and representatives will follow the April 1 deadline, and production is expected to begin in the fall of this year. Distribution of the official State medallion will be arranged by mutual agreement between the company and the Commission.

The range of interests within a population as varied as New York's requires a variety of programs to match. For the general public, a mustering of the Brigade of the American Revolution introduces the camp life of the common soldier of the period accurately and dramatically. It is for this reason that an encampment of over thirty members of the Brigade at the State Fair was sponsored by the Commission in 1971. In another field, the Commission has agreed to join others in support of the

Please Post Where The Citizenry Gather Frequently

**SCULPTORS AND MEDALISTS
RESIDING IN NEW YORK STATE
TAKE NOTICE!**

TWO CONTESTS!

\$6,000.00 IN PRIZES

**BICENTENNIAL
CELEBRATION!**



2 OFFICIAL MEDALS 2

For

**New York State American Revolution
Bicentennial Commission**



and

**New York City American Revolution
Bicentennial Committee**

Designs to be submitted by April 1, 1972

**SPONSORED BY
AMERICAN NUMISMATIC SOCIETY
AND
MEDALLION ART COMPANY**

Two Panels of Distinguished Judges!

NO ENTRY FEES

NO LIMIT ON NUMBER OF SKETCHES

ENTER ONE OR BOTH COMPETITIONS

☆☆ SEND FOR FULL DETAILS AND ENTRY FORMS ☆☆

★ TO ★

NEW YORK STATE AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL COMMISSION
Louis Tucker · New York State Education Department
99 Washington Avenue · Albany, New York 12224

NEW YORK CITY AMERICAN REVOLUTION BICENTENNIAL COMMITTEE
James Phipps · Metropolitan Museum of Art
5th Avenue & 82nd Street · New York, New York 10028

archeological field work recently accomplished on the site of the Fishkill Supply Depot. This major center of Revolutionary War activity near Beacon cannot be appreciated by a wide public until it is better understood by the scholars who have literally been digging into it. The Commission hopes to assist in the process by supporting the progress to date.

Another cooperative undertaking promises to yield a publication of wider immediate interest. This is an illustrated booklet narrating the highlights of the Revolution as it passed through the Champlain Valley. To be jointly sponsored by the State Commission and the Champlain-Upper Hudson Bicentennial Committee, it is scheduled to appear this spring.

Several publication projects are nearing completion as the year ends. One is a descriptive guide to the valuable manuscript collections from the Revolutionary period in the New York State Library. Another is a selected bibliography of published historical writing on New York and the Revolution. The latter will complement the booklet already published for young readers, and is intended to meet the needs of the general public and the mature student. A third is an illustrated guide booklet for visitors to the historic sites related to the Revolution in the State.

Behind every activity are people and ideas. The roster of the Commission remains unchanged since the year opened. Although the range and number of its activities have also increased over the past year, paid commission staff remains at its previous size, with Richard S. Allen as Program Coordinator and Mrs. Phyllis H. Winkelman as Editorial Associate. Miss Gail Canfora joined the staff as stenographer in October replacing Maurice O'Brien, who has returned to graduate studies.

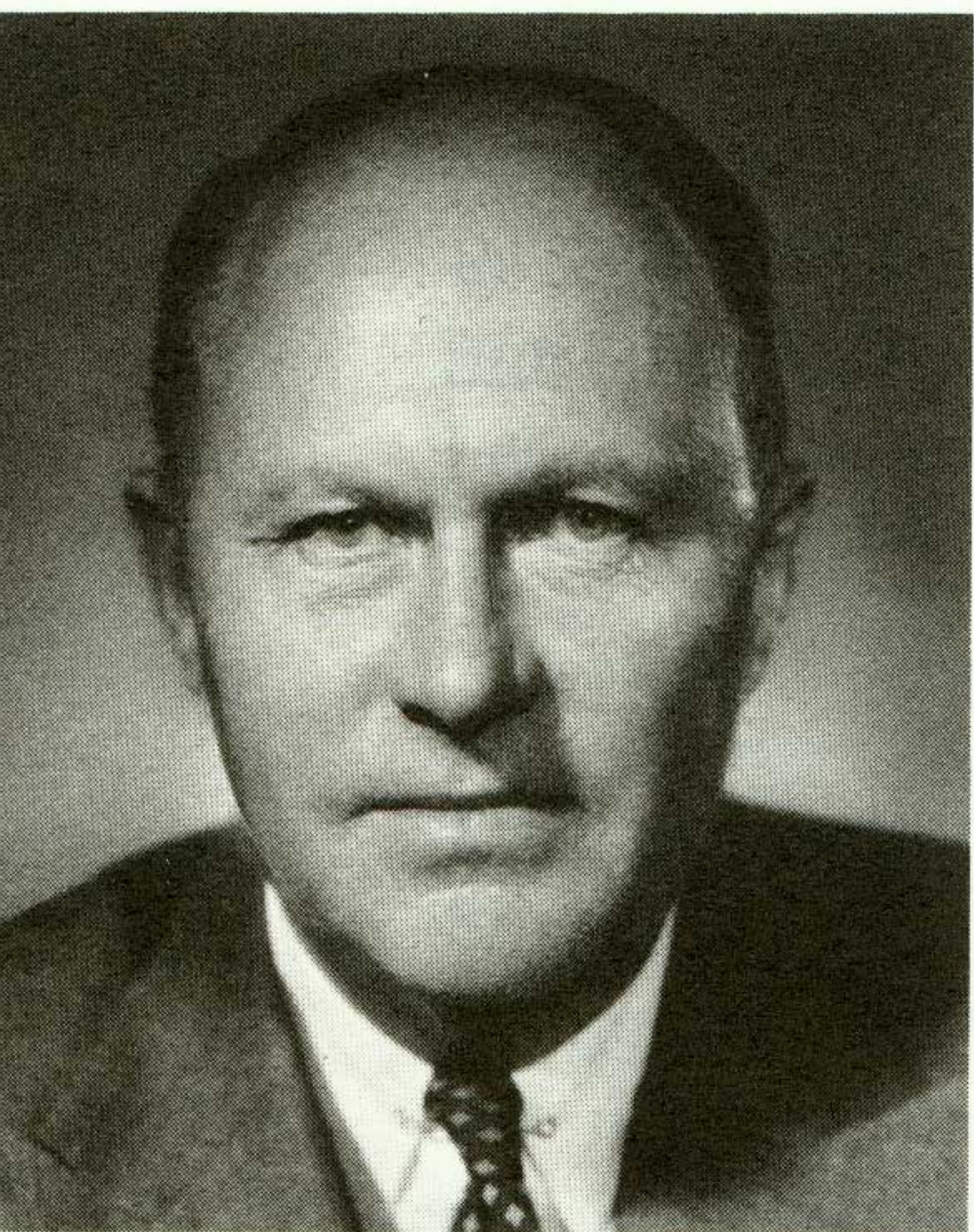
Recognizing the importance of the thriftiest use of State funds in these times, the Commission has taken measures to hold operational expenses to a minimum. Printing and purchasing are ordered on State contracts where possible. Special publications are printed after bids are received from firms of known capability for the specific job. No design or mailing costs have been incurred on publications, since these services are contributed by the State Education Department in accordance with the offer of staff support made by Commissioner of Education Ewald B. Nyquist during the initial organization period in 1969. Office over-

head and the salaries of the Executive Director (who is also the State Historian), Principal Historian, and other staff assigned periodically to bicentennial work are covered by the Education Department's Office of State History under this agreement. This merger of interests, skills and facilities is working to the mutual advantage of the two agencies and permits major savings to the State.

THE EXTENT AND QUALITY of the bicentennial observances in 1975 and beyond in New York State will depend largely on the foresight and investments made in these preceding years. Beginning in 1975, the public will rightly expect to see results. The Commission is confident that the year ahead will bring fresh evidence of a statewide response to the bicentennial challenge. The Champlain and Upper Hudson Bicentennial Committee and several others have been functioning for several years. The recently organized New York City American Revolution Bicentennial Commission will be heard from. There are new commissions among the counties in Broome, Monroe, and Clinton, and in towns such as Huntington and Oyster Bay. The Daughters of the American Revolution and the New York State Library Association are among the many voluntary groups making their special place in the bicentennial. And many of the more than 300 local historical societies have shown themselves ready to join in planning and working in their communities along with the official historians of 42 counties and 1,100 towns and villages.

In short, the initial awakening period has arrived and the second stage of preparation is opening. It is a working stage, not toward a single, brief exposition that profits nobody and exhausts everybody, but toward an extended and many-centered observance in a diversity of styles. *E Pluribus Unum* is a motto the Founding Fathers chose, and there might be no better time than now to heed it. The *many* are beginning to do their part. The *unity* is the continuing task of this Commission, and it is dedicated to moving forward in that spirit.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION



John H. G. Pell
Chairman

(Photo by Bachrach)

John H. G. Pell, chairman, is a Manhattan business executive and historian. Active in a large number of civic and historical organizations, he is probably best known for his association with Fort Ticonderoga, whose grounds and buildings his family has owned for 150 years.

E. K. Fretwell, Jr., vice-chairman, is president of the State University College at Buffalo. He has made education his career, having served as a faculty member at Teachers College, Columbia University, and as assistant commissioner for higher education with the New York State Education Department before assuming his present post.

Walter Averill II of Poughkeepsie, a former hotel executive, is engaged in regional promotion as executive vice-president of the Hudson River Valley Association.

Major General John C. Baker of Troy is chief of staff to the governor and commanding general of the New York National Guard. Enlisting in the National Guard as a private in 1935, he rose through the ranks to his present position.

Mrs. Mary Biondi of Ogdensburg, formerly in publishing and printing, is Saint Lawrence County historian.

J. Moreau Brown is associate secretary of the General Electric Foundation in Ossining, and administers that organization's educational support programs. He is past president of the Empire State Society of Sons of the American Revolution.

Rev. Laman H. Bruner, rector of Albany's St. Peter's Church (Episcopal), also serves as chaplain of the New York State Assembly.

Mrs. Jane des Grange is director of the Suffolk Museum and Carriage House at Stony Brook on Long Island.

Miss Laura G. Ebell of Patchogue, a retired teacher, is active in local history, the D.A.R., and church work on her native Long Island.

Robert A. Fusco of Waterford is a legislative correspondent and columnist with the Record newspapers in Troy.

Supreme Court Justice Guy A. Graves of Schenectady, former assistant to Governor Thomas E. Dewey, has had a long career as a practicing lawyer.

Otto E. Koegel, a lawyer of New York and Westchester County, is chairman of the John Jay House Restoration Commission.

Nathan S. Langdon, a Greenwich publisher, has long been active as chairman of various celebrations and historic observances.

H. Bert Mack of Maspeth is a prominent contractor and industrial developer, who in recent years has headed many Long Island civic and philanthropic endeavors.

Dr. I. Frank Mogavero of Grand Island is a professor of history at Niagara University.

State Senator Dalwin J. Niles of Johnstown is a former children's court judge and a practicing lawyer.

Judge Nicholas M. Pette of Jamaica has had a distinguished career as a jurist. He retired from the state supreme court in 1967.

Joseph Verner Reed, Jr., a Manhattan banker, is active in theatrical and civic organizations. He is a fellow of the Pierpont Morgan Library and a trustee of the Yale University Art Gallery.

Dr. Seth Spellman of Albany, a retired lieutenant colonel, was engaged in psychiatric social work in the



E. K. Fretwell, Jr.
Vice-Chairman

U.S. Army for twenty-five years. He is currently an associate professor of sociology and assistant to the president at the State University of New York at Albany.

Mrs. Mildred F. Taylor of Lyons has long been active on commissions dealing with history, and served as a member of the New York State Assembly from 1947 to 1960.

Col. Frederick P. Todd, author and life-long student of military history, lives in Cornwall-on-Hudson since his retirement as director of the West Point Museum.

William Meuse, Saratoga National Historical Park historian, left, relives the Battle of Saratoga with Col. Frederick P. Todd, Judge Guy A. Graves, Richard S. Allen, and Mrs. Mary Biondi, following the Commission's October meeting. Photo by David Thurheimer.



CHAPTER 630 — LAWS OF 1968
As amended June 25, 1971 by Chapter 939

AN ACT

Creating a temporary state commission to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary of the American revolution and making an appropriation for the expenses of the commission

The People of the State of New York, represented in Senate and Assembly, do enact as follows:

Section 1. A temporary state commission to be known as the New York American revolution bicentennial commission is hereby created in order to provide for appropriate observances, ceremonies and other activities to commemorate the two hundredth anniversary of the American revolution *and the two hundredth anniversary of the creation of the State of New York.**

§2. The commission hereby created shall consist of twenty-one citizens of the state, of whom eleven shall be appointed by the governor, one of whom shall be the chief of staff to the governor, five by the temporary president of the senate, and five by the speaker of the assembly. The governor shall appoint from its membership the chairman and vice-chairman of the commission. Vacancies in the membership and in the offices of chairman and vice-chairman of the commission shall be filled in the manner provided for original appointments.

§3. For the accomplishment of its purposes, the commission shall be authorized and empowered to prepare an over-all program to include specific plans for commemorating the two hundredth anniversary of the American revolution *and the two hundredth anniversary of the State of New York.* In preparing these plans and programs the commission shall give due consideration to any similar plans advanced by any federal, state, municipal, civic, patriotic, military, veterans and historical bodies and may designate special committees with representation from the above-mentioned bodies to plan and conduct specific ceremonies. The commission shall cooperate in the program and plans of any American

*Portions in italics are added by Chapter 939.

revolution bicentennial commission established under the laws of the United States and may cooperate in the programs and plans of such commission and similar bodies established by other states, including participation in any exhibition commemorating the American revolution. Through its own personnel or in cooperation with any public or private agency, the commission may undertake, prepare and publish any studies, publications or other writings which it may deem relevant to the participation of the state of New York and its citizens in the American revolution.

§4. The commission may employ and at pleasure remove such personnel as it may deem necessary for the performance of its functions and fix their compensation within the amounts made available by appropriation therefor.

§5. The commission may meet within or without the state. It may participate in bicentennial observances and ceremonies during the years nineteen hundred sixty-eight to nineteen hundred eighty-one, inclusive, on the revolutionary war battlefields and other historic sites, where troops from New York served, or where other events significant to the state of New York in relation to the American revolution *and/or the founding of New York as a state* occurred. The commission may hold public or private hearings and shall have all the powers of a legislative committee pursuant to the legislative law.

§6. The members of the commission shall receive no compensation for their services but shall be allowed their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties hereunder.

§7. The commission may request and shall receive from any department, division, board, bureau, commission or agency of the state or any political subdivision thereof such facilities, assistance and data as it deems necessary or desirable to properly carry out its powers and duties hereunder. The commission, in its discretion, may establish an advisory counsel to assist in its work.

§8. The commission is hereby authorized and empowered to make and sign any agreements and to do and perform any acts that may be necessary, desirable or proper to carry out the purposes of this act, not including the erection of monuments and memorials.

§9. Notwithstanding any inconsistent provisions of law, general, special or local, no officer or employee of the state or of any civil division thereof shall be deemed to have forfeited or shall forfeit his office or employment by reason of his acceptance of membership on such commission.

§10. The commission shall submit an interim report to the governor and the legislature presenting the preliminary plans of the commission not later than March first, nineteen hundred sixty-nine. Thereafter, the commission shall submit an annual report to the governor and the legislature not later than March first of each year. The commission shall submit such other interim report or reports to the governor and the legislature as it may deem advisable. A final report shall be made to the governor and the legislature on or before December thirty-first, nineteen hundred eighty-one, upon which date the commission hereby created shall terminate.

§11. The sum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000), or so much thereof as may be necessary, is hereby appropriated from any funds in the state treasury in the general fund to the credit of the state purposes fund, not otherwise appropriated, and made available to the temporary state commission for its expenses, including personal service, in carrying out the provisions of this act. Such moneys shall be payable out of the state treasury on the audit and warrant of the comptroller on vouchers certified or approved by the chairman of the commission or by an officer or employee of the commission designated by the chairman.

§12. This act shall take effect immediately.