



Happy Birthday U.S.!

Photos by Ben Susso

Shortly before summer recess the children in St. Charles Borromeo Preschool program delved into a little history of the United States and held a

celebration of their own for the Bicentennial.

Clockwise, top left, the children wave miniature flags,

some with 13 stars, some with 50. Pamela Merkel, Chad Winheim and Marcie Wehner look at the pictures in a big book about our country.

Martin Whelan counts the stripes on the flag.

Michael Barton, Cindy Titus and David Schultz play peek-a-

boo with the camera, while Kelly McConnell takes it all in. In the center, a Betsy Ross doll displays her design for the flag. Sister Rachel is the teacher of the class.

The U.S. of A.

Was Ours a Real Revolution? Yes!

Dr. Gwinn is professor of history and chairman of the History Department at Nazareth College. This article is one of a special series examining the American Revolution as we celebrate the bicentennial year.

By WILLIAM R. GWINN

For two centuries our Independence Day orators have been praising the American Revolution as an ideal revolution. But was it really a revolution at all? The bicentennial invites us to seek an answer in the views of those historians who, since 1791, have made the American Revolution their specialty.

In 1926, to commemorate the 150th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the American historian J. Franklin Jameson published an influential, interpretative study, The American Revolution. Considered as a Social Movement. In it, Dr. Jameson expressed the hope, that future interpreters of the American Revolution would be "much fairer to the British and Loyalists" than American historians had been in the past; that they would revise the popular estimate that "the whole American population of that time was heroic"; and that they would consider "the American Revolution in broader aspects than simply the political and the military."

In the half-century since Dr. Jameson wrote these words, the American historical profession in scores of books and articles, has, on the whole, fulfilled his hopes. However, with the bicentennial upon us, new questions of historical interpretation have arisen. These tend to revolve around the question of whether the American Revolution was really revolutionary or not. Various comparative anatomies of modern revolutions have been assembled and produced which rate the French and Russian Revolutions, for example, as making world history, while the American Revolution is described as an event of little more than local importance.

With much better balance, Professor Richard B. Morris in his study The American Revolution Reconsidered, published in 1967, asserts that "primarily, though by no means exclusively, the American Revolution must be considered as an anticolonial war for independence, the first of many to follow. It takes on an extra dimension, however, by being not only a war of liberation from



overseas rule but a war for freedom; by its insistent quest not only for independence but for the achievement of constitutional guarantees incompatible with its erstwhile colonial status."

Although lacking in newness and sophisticated modern scholarship, the oldest and most contemporary accounts of the American Revolution by Dr. David Ramsay and Friedrich Gentz tend to support the Morris view.

Dr. Ramsay's History of the American Revolution, published in London in 1791, provides a temperate assessment of the events and avoids having recourse to demonology. Ramsay had no doubts about the impact of the

American achievement of independence "figuring in the annals of the world" since the Americans "with a great experience of blood and treasure" have rescued themselves and their posterity "from the domination of Europe."

Friedrich Gentz, the first Continental European scholar to address himself to the study of the American Revolution and to use the comparative approach, published his essay on the subject

in Berlin in 1800. John Quincy Adams translated the essay into English for publication in America and praised it as the "clearest" account of the American Revolution he had read.

Indeed, Gentz judged the American Revolution to have been one of "glorious moderation," but had no doubt about the revolutionary character of the American war of independence nor of its substantial impact outside of America.

New Assistant Sent To Downtown Parish

Redemptorist Father James G. Donlan of Holy Redeemer College, Washington, D.C., has been appointed assistant pastor of Our Lady of Victory - St. Joseph Church in downtown Rochester. The appointment was made by Bishop Joseph L. Hogan and Redemptorist provincial headquarters in Brooklyn.

Father Donlan spent the first 20 years of his priesthood in the Bronx parish of the Immaculate Conception. He served for six years as pastor of Our Lady of Fatima Church, and was pastor for a like number of years at Sacred Heart of

Jesus' Church, Highlandtown, Baltimore, Md. He also served on the Personnel Board of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, the Board of Education and the Financial Steering Committee and as associate pastor of St. Mary's Church, Annapolis, Md. He has been at Holy Redeemer College for the past three years as vice rector and procurator.

Father Donlan is a native of Brooklyn. He studied for the priesthood at St. Mary's College in North East, Pa., and Mount St. Alphonsus in Toronto, where he was ordained June 15, 1956.