

Bethinking of Olde Orleans: Major General John S. Thompson

4-11-13

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"No man is worth his salt who is not ready at all times to risk his body, to risk his well-being, to risk his life, in a great cause." Theodore Roosevelt

General Thompson was born in Exbridge, Ontario, Canada and educated at the Canada Business University at Chatham and the Ontario Agricultural College at Guelph.

As a young man he came to the United States and became a citizen in 1900. For the rest of his life he resided in Orleans County and lived at 216 Park Avenue in Medina with his wife, the former Edith Hill whom he married in 1914.

His military career began in 1898 when he enlisted in the 29th Separate Company New York National Guard. He was commissioned Second Lieutenant in that company during 1907. It merged during WWI with the 3rd Infantry becoming the 108th Infantry.

During that time he served as Captain and Major, participating at Ypres-Lys and in the Somme offensive and in the Dickebusch Lake and Scherpenberg sector in Flanders.

He commanded the 2nd Battalion, 108th Infantry A.E.F. in the breaking of the Hindenburg Line on Sept. 29, 1918.

He then commanded the 108th Infantry as Colonel for eleven years and was promoted to Brigadier General in 1930 in command

service with the rank of Major General after thirty-nine years of service to the state and nation.

General Thompson was elected as our assemblyman Nov. 4, 1930 and represented Orleans County until the time of his death. He succeeded Frank H. Lattin of Gaines and preceded Alonzo Waters of Medina.

From 1934 to 1945 he served as chairman of the Public Service Committee, when he resigned to become the chairman of the committee on taxation. Also, he served on the Interstate Committee which investigated public utilities.

General Thompson was also the one New York member on the Interstate Commission on the Delaware River Basin. In

1941 he served as chairman of the Orleans County Civilian Defense Council and in 1942 was appointed Director of Civilian Protection for Orleans County.

General Thompson had many civic interests which included serving for one term 1921-1924 on the Medina Village Board. He was director of the Medina Savings and Loan Association for twenty-four years and organized the James P. Clark Post of American Legion and served as its first commander.

He was also a charter member of the Lincoln Post of Veterans of Foreign Wars. In 1926 he served as president of the National Guard Association of New York State and was first vice-



president of the National Guard Association of the United States in 1927.

He was a member of the Presbyterian Church of Medina, Royal Arch Masons, Genesee Commandery and Knowlesville Grange.