

## MEMORIAL

TO

JOHN FULTON THOMPSON

John Fulton Thompson was born on April 26, 1911. He died on December 22, 1991. During the intervening 80 years, he compiled a record of service to his country, to his profession and to his community.

He was born in Racine. His parents, Fulton Thompson and Elizabeth Clancy, were pioneers of the community. After graduation from Park High School as a member of its first graduating class in 1929, John attended Amherst College where he received his B.A. degree. He then entered the University of Wisconsin Law School and graduated in 1936.

The news story of his death in the Journal Times reported that he had received two degrees from the University of Wisconsin Law School. Here some history is needed. When John graduated, lawyers were granted a Bachelor of Laws degree even though six, and in John's case, seven years of education preceded it. It was possible, however, for law students with exceptional scholastic records to do research, take additional courses, additional residence, do some writing and be awarded the advanced degree of Doctor of Juridical Science. John did this. In the late fifties or early sixties, the law schools commenced awarding the Juris Doctor degree in recognition that the education was equivalent to that of a Ph.D. Lawyers with a Bachelor's degree were permitted to

exchange their degree for that of a Juris Doctor. I don't know if John did this or not.

Probably not. John was not impressed with his degrees. He did not display them. He was elected to an honorary legal fraternity upon graduation because of high scholarship, but he did not display that award either. He did not glory in his past. He concentrated instead upon the here and now.

He was a Lt. Commander in the Navy during World War II and saw service in the Solomons. A favorite book of his was "Lonely Vigil, Coastwatchers of the Solomons" by Walter Lord.

After the war ended, he returned to Racine and law practice. He was a good lawyer. He contributed his services to the State Bar and the University of Wisconsin Law School. He authored a treatise on leases of real property which was, and still is, used by lawyers in the state when drafting a real estate lease.

His service to the community was monumental. He truly made Racine a greater place to live. He was a founder of the Racine Theater Guild. He was a founder and creator of the Racine Community Foundation. He served on the board of directors of the YMCA, the Racine Area Chamber of Commerce, Taylor Children's Home, Racine Area United Way and Saint Luke's Memorial Hospital. He was President of the Racine Board of Parks. A park on the east side of Main Street, just south of the River, has been dedicated to him. It was a proud and happy event in 1963 when he received the V.F.W. Citizen of the Year Award. This was one plaque that he did display on his wall.

His wife, Gloria, preceded him in death. They had four

children who survive. Sarah Thompson Kruger, Jeffrey, Christopher and Jonathan.

On a previous occasion, during John's lifetime, I had the honor of introducing him to a non-lawyer audience. What I said then, I wish to repeat now. It is even more appropriate when the audience consists of lawyers and members of the judiciary. It is a quotation taken from a speech made by Attorney Joseph H. Choate to the Chicago Bar in 1898.

"Let us magnify our calling. Let us be true to those great occasions and respond with all our might to those great demands, so that when our work is done, of us at least it may be said that we transmitted our profession to our successors as great, as useful and as spotless as it came to our hand."

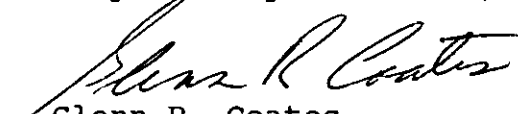
John was indeed the paradigm for that call.

Until now, I have said nothing about John's crippling illness which plagued him most of his adult life. This is not an oversight. John would have preferred it that way.

John was a courageous man, a gentle man, a religious man and a proud man. I use those adjectives in their finest sense. May he rest in peace.

Dated at Racine, Wisconsin, January 22, 1993.

Respectfully submitted,



Glenn R. Coates

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John Fulton Thompson.

1991

STATE OF WISCONSIN : CIRCUIT COURT : RACINE COUNTY

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MEMORIAL TO THE LIFE, WORK  
AND CHARACTER OF

VINCENT A. VASSALLO

(Presented to the Circuit Court  
and the Racine County Bar on  
January 22, 1993.)

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May it please the Court, it is my privilege to present this memorial to the life, work and character of Vincent A. Vassallo who practiced law in the City of Racine from 1950 to 1983.

Mr. Vassallo was a Racine product from start to finish. He was born in Racine on December 6, 1921 and was raised in Racine schools ultimately attending William Horlick High School from which he graduated in 1940. He gave evidence of both his scholarship and leadership while attending Horlick where he was an excellent student, elected president of his graduating class and was one of the school's representatives at Badger Boys State. He also participated with the Horlick High School football team. Mr. Vassallo's speech at the graduation ceremonies exhibited his great sense of humor by leaving everyone in attendance rolling in the aisles with laughter.

Mr. Vassallo entered the service with the Army and achieved the rank of Master Sergeant. He saw active duty during the war in both Okinawa and Saipan. He often talked about his experiences in the fox holes of the region and added his great touch of humor to the otherwise serious stories of events that occurred during the war.

Mr. Vassallo attended Marquette University and became involved in the speeded up program which permitted him to graduate with his law degree in 1950. He attained excellent grades and, upon graduation, opened his law practice as a sole practitioner in the City of Racine at the Baker Building, then the city's largest office structure.

Mr. Vassallo was very much the "lone wolf" type of practitioner. He practiced totally by himself his first seven years and then shared an office (although not in partnership) with Jerome Barina, also in the Baker Building, from 1957 until 1970. From there Mr. Vassallo moved his sole practice to the old Marino Building at 218 Fifth Street and, in the latter years of his active practice, moved to the new Heritage Bank structure near the intersection of Three Mile Road and Main Street.

In 1953, Mr. Vassallo married the former Kathleen (Kay) Jellyman, who was born and raised in England. Miss

Jellyman had formerly married Mr. Vassallo's brother, Charles, when the two met in England. There were two children of her marriage to Charles who was on the police force and died very early in life. There were then three more children from Kathleen Jellyman's marriage to Mr. Vincent Vassallo who spent great quantities of time raising the five children.

Throughout life Mr. Vassallo had a wonderful sense of humor which he and all his friends enjoyed. He did not usually tell formal jokes as such, but was able to keep a stream of off-the-cuff remarks rolling that regaled audiences of both laymen and lawyers.

He was also very much of a family man keeping in close contact with his siblings and doing a wonderful job in raising both his children and the children of his deceased brother's marriage to Kathleen Jellyman.

Recreationally, Mr. Vassallo participated in both golf and bowling after entering the private practice, but his primary recreation consisted of walking about four miles per day around the area of his home in North Bay frequently doing so early in the morning hours prior to going to his office.

As mentioned before Mr. Vassallo had played high school football and severely broke his nose while playing.

He took a great deal of ribbing from friends and relatives over never having received recommended plastic surgery, nor did he ever return to the football scene. Recreationally, he also enjoyed both travel and reading.

Mr. Vassallo's work, which he loved very much, was of the general practice type and centered around a variety of legal interests which included domestic relations, personal injury, probate, criminal and bankruptcy law. Throughout his practice, Mr. Vassallo was able to adopt and maintain a non-controversial approach using his great sense of humor to disarm his opponents and most of the lawyers and adjusters who visited his office looked forward to such occasions with great anticipation.

In 1983, Mr. Vassallo had become somewhat disabled from Alzheimer's disease. He retired from the active practice and with his wife moved to Sarasota, Florida, where they lived for three years. But with the disease continuing and worsening, they returned to Racine in 1986, residing at 3620 North Bay Drive, just two doors from their former residence.

During his professional life, Mr. Vassallo was active in the Racine Jaycees, the Italian-American Club, and Roma Lodge. He was best known, however, as being a very good family man with his wife, children and close relatives.



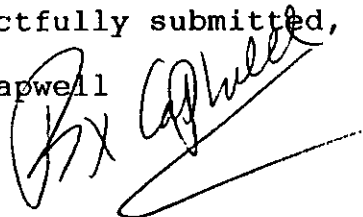
His help and advice were often sought by the younger lawyers who followed him.

His passing on December 19, 1991 was a grievous loss to the Racine County Bar as well as to his friends and family. Our heart felt sympathy goes to his family and the host of relatives and close friends who survive him.

I respectfully request that this memorial be spread upon the records of the Circuit Court of Racine County as a memorial to the life, work and character of Mr. Vassallo, a popular and respected member of the Racine County Bar.

Respectfully submitted,

Rex Capwell

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Rex Capwell', written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Vicent A. Vassallo

1991