General York was graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York in the Class of ’38 and commissioned in the Infantry the same year. From the Gold Bar of a Second Lieutenant to the three stars of a Lieutenant General, York has held every combat command along the way.

General York was decorated 18 times with the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, The Bronze Star with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart with Five Oak Leaf Clusters, two French decorations the Legion d’Honneur and the Croix de Guerre with Palms; and along the Combat Infantry Badge, York wears the wings of a Military Pilot as well as well as the insignia of the Airborne Corps.

Since World War II, General York’s military assignments included Commandant of the Cadet Corps at West Point, Military Attache in Singapore, Military Advisor in Vietnam and Commandant of Fort Benning. As Commanding General of the 82nd Airborne Division he led the landings at Santo Domingo, at the direction of President Johnson, to help stabilize and restore law and order to the Dominican Republic; and to protect the lives of American citizens. In 1968, he took command of the 18th Airborne Corps.

His erect, lean, solid, battle scarred frame, his handsome face lined with vitality and eyes that always smile in contrast to the line of his determined lips that coalesce with a rugged jaw. York’s mere presence always commanded respect.

Today, a vigorous 56, General York’s personality still radiates. When asked: “Taking into consideration all of the strategy, sophisticated equipment, qualified leadership and intelligence information in the preparation of a battle, what in your opinion is the single most important asset to victory?” York simply replied: “The will to fight.”

General Robert H. York joins those few in history, who have personified the immortal words of Will Rogers: It’s great to be a great man, but it’s greater to be human.”

Jack H. Strauss
Regt. Hqs., 331st

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