

William J. Dwyer

1894 – 1958

William J. Dwyer was born in Truxton and educated at the Truxton Central School and Cortland High School. He graduated from Cornell University in 1916 with a degree in Civil Engineering. Dwyer worked summers for the New York State Highway Department while in college, and full-time after graduation.

He joined the Engineering Reserve Corps of the U.S. Army shortly after war was declared by the United States in June 1917 and was assigned to Company K of the 23rd Engineers. Dwyer went overseas in February 1918 and saw action in the St. Mihiel, Besle and Meuse-Argonne campaigns.



Montsec American Monument

After returning home in July 1919, Dwyer went to work for New York State until he was appointed as the Superintendent of Highways in Cortland County in 1921. In an era when many roads were little more than muddy country lanes, William Dwyer worked to improve the roads of Cortland County into modern byways that would make this area a hub for business, industry and recreation in Central New York State.

Dwyer was a licensed Land Surveyor and Professional Engineer and was instrumental in getting the support from county officials to build Little York Park where families could go and relax on weekends. The park was abandoned by the New York Power Corporation in 1932. In the late 1930s, the Little York Garden Club urged the County Board of Supervisors to buy the park, but it wasn't until 1951 that William Dwyer began making improvements to the park. The park was renamed Dwyer Park in 1959 to honor his memory for his longstanding career as

County Superintendent of Highways. He served this position for thirty-seven years and built, improved, and maintained the roadways that still serve Cortland County and have contributed to this region's economic and cultural prosperity.

Dwyer was very active in the American Legion, serving in Leadership positions from Post Commander of the Cortland City Post to Sixth District Commander and Dept. of New York Vice Commander. He served as the Treasurer for the Dept. of New York for 13 years. He also served 3 years on the National Finance committee and 5 years as its Chair, plus on other state and national committees. Additionally, he was active in the Cortland Rotary Club, Elk's Club, Knights of Columbus, St. Vincent De Paul Society and the Holy Name Society of St. Mary's Church.

As a result of William J. Dwyer's commitment to providing good roads and pleasant recreation spaces for his community, residents of Cortland County and visitors from afar can continue to travel and play safely, comfortably, and enjoyably in Cortland.



Monsec American Monument, France, was dedicated in 1937 and commemorates the American forces who fought in the Battle of Saint-Mihiel in World War I.