

Tech 5 Edward Parker Harris

From Paul Carter in the Orange County Historical Society *Record*:¹

“Tech 5 Edward Parker Harris, son of Benjamin Franklin Harris and Lena Binns Harris, was born on 24 August 1921 in the Green Springs area of Louisa County. There were eight children in the family. He attended school through the sixth grade and worked as a spinner at the American Silk Mill before entering the military. He was inducted in the Army in Orange on 3 July 1942.

“Harris had his basic training at Camp Lee, Virginia and did further training at Camp Swift, Texas and Camp Blanding, Florida. He was deployed overseas in October 1943—first to England, then to France and finally to Belgium as a member of the 279th Quartermaster Refrigeration Company. He was killed in a truck accident in Belgium on 8 January 1945.

“The 279th Quartermaster Refrigeration Company was part of the 471st Quartermaster Group, which served to supply the troops immediately as they arrived in France as part of the D-Day operations. Supplies requiring refrigeration were loaded directly from reefer (refrigerated railroad) cars to the truck and delivered to their destination. When the amount of perishables, such as meat and butter, exceeded the refrigerator truck numbers, regular trucks would be used and sped to the intended destination.

“Harris’ skills gained the respect of his fellow soldiers. Captain Uriah Hunter of the 471st Quartermaster Group wrote to Mrs. Harris from Belgium, ‘The men of the company asked that I especially remember them to you in my expression of sympathy over the passing of their soldier comrade.’

“From his office in New York, Milton Rubin, owner of the American Silk Mill, wrote a letter to the family, ‘There is very little one can say except that every man, woman and child in our country is indebted to him for the sacrifice he has made on their behalf. This, I hope, will sustain you in your grief.’

“He was buried in a temporary grave in Belgium and his remains were returned to the United States and interred in Culpeper National Cemetery on 10 December 1947.”

¹ Paul Carter, “Tech 5 Edward Parker Harris,” Orange County Historical Society *Record*, Vol. 50, No. 1 (Spring 2019), 1.