

MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Proudly Honors



ORVILLE HANFORD THOMPSON
UNITED STATES ARMY

as

PURPLE HEART PATRIOT

OCTOBER 2024

Honoring His Brother's Service and Sacrifice

Written by Harley Thompson

Sponsored by: Jane Randolph Jefferson Chapter, NSDAR



Born April 1, 1923

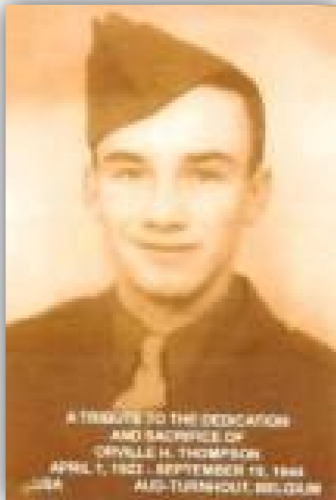
WWII • Army Staff Sergeant

Entered Service in 1942

Killed in Action on September 19, 1944

Oud-Turnhout, Belgium

Awarded the Purple Heart Medal Posthumously



Orville and three other crew members were returning to England after tolling a glide during the "Market Garden Campaign". My brother was the radio operator on a C-47. The crew consisted of a pilot, co-pilot, engineer, and radio operator.

I learned that my brother jumped out of the plane shortly before it crashed. I met two people who saw the plane get hit by ground fire and then saw my brother leave the plane before it hit the ground. Some of the people from the town rushed to find my brother and he was buried on the spot where they found him. During the time his body was at this location, several people from time to time would place

flowers on his grave. Later his body was moved to a different site in Belgium, until he was moved again to the National Military Cemetery in Jefferson City, Missouri.

The people in Belgium had a memorial service for the crew members in Oud-Turnhout, Belgium on September 17, 2010. My wife and I, along with our two daughters, went to the memorial service and it was an unbelievable experience. The monument was erected in the Hamlet of Rhooide, just adjacent to Oud-Turnhout, Belgium. The

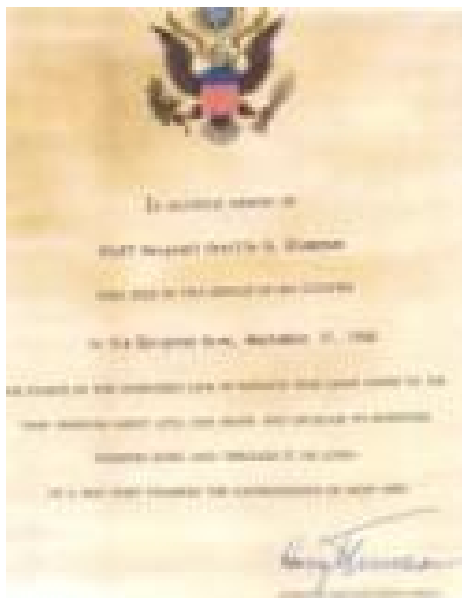
monument is likely 700 to 1,000 yards from the crash site and around 50 or so yards away from a small chapel. There were two eyewitnesses of the crash that we met when we first went to the memorial.



Orville Thompson grew up on a farm in Enon and attended the local Lincoln School, a one-room schoolhouse. His family moved to Kansas City when he was 15 years old.

A couple who lived across the street from the monument came up to Harley, and his wife Charlene, and said they would see to it that the area was kept clean and flowers were placed there from time to time. We have become close to this couple, and we renewed our friendship with them and others when we went back to the monument site in October 2014. The monument site is at such a peaceful and beautiful location, it is hard to imagine all this tragedy could have happened there.

The people there are still thankful for what the Allies did to give them back their freedom!



SERGT. ORVILLE H. THOMPSON
Services Will Be Held Friday at Jefferson City.

Services for Staff Sgt. Orville H. Thompson, 23, who was killed in action in Belgium September 19, 1944, will be held at 11 o'clock Friday at the graveside in the National cemetery at Jefferson City.

Sergeant Thompson was the son of Mr. and Mrs. William C. Thompson, 4037 Main street. He attended the Northeast high school. Before he entered the service in 1942, he was a mechanic for the Prier Brass Manufacturing company. He served overseas eleven months as a radio operator on a C-47 transport plane. He was awarded the Purple Heart posthumously.



Sgt. Orville H. Thompson.

Also surviving are five sisters, Mrs. Edith Melton, route No. 4, North Kansas City; Mrs. Dorothy Gill, 828 Bales avenue; Mrs. Faith Sausley, 1624 Crystal avenue; Mrs. Mary Ruth Schmuck, Sunflower, Kas., and Miss Pauline Thompson of the home, and two brothers, W. Paul Thompson, New York City, and Harley Thompson of the home.



Orville Thompson in Belgium.