<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Hometown:</strong></th>
<th>Maud, Oklahoma</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Entered Service:</strong></td>
<td>May 23, 1942</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Unit:</strong></td>
<td>195th Field Artillery Battalion, Battery A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Rank:</strong></td>
<td>Private, U.S. Army</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Award(s):</strong></td>
<td>Good Conduct Medal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cemetery:</strong></td>
<td>Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Cemetery and Veterans Memorial Seminole, Oklahoma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

November 24, 1917 - March 31, 2014

Private Edmond A. Harjo

RESEARCHED BY AMANDA KORDELISKI
Before the War

On November 24, 1917, Edmond Andrew Harjo was born in Maud, Oklahoma, to Tony and Yanna Harjo. Known as Andrew to his family, he lived in the vicinity of his hometown for the majority of his life. He graduated from Seminole High School and together with his brother, enlisted in the U.S. Army after graduation.

Military Experience

Harjo served in the 195th Field Artillery Battalion, Battery A in the European campaign of World War II. Following training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, the unit departed New York City in February 1944 for Hursley, England.

After his battalion landed in Normandy on July 16, 1944, Harjo was walking through an orchard one evening and heard another soldier singing a song in the Creek language. Creek and Seminole are similar dialects of the Muscogee language and Harjo, a Seminole, recognized the song. Harjo and the other soldier began conversing in Creek, and a captain overheard them. The captain immediately capitalized on the opportunity of two American Indians both fluent in a similar dialect of Muscogee, and Harjo became a code talker, who sent military messages using his native language.
The 195th Field Artillery Battalion participated in the battle to free Cherbourg, a key deep water port needed to help supply the Allied army’s advance to Germany. They followed the army, supporting the Battle of Saint-Lô in late July and the Falaise Pocket in August. By late September they advanced to Belgium. They participated in the battle of Aachen in October, supported the Battle of the Bulge, and advanced to Mausbach, Germany by early 1945. The unit crossed the Rhine River on March 21, 1945, ending near Leipzig, Germany.

Edmond Harjo’s honorable discharge from the U.S. Army, October 18, 1945. National Archives and Records Administration - St. Louis.

Veteran Experience

Harjo returned home after the war and lived the rest of his life in Oklahoma. He earned both a bachelors and masters degree from Oklahoma City University and spent his life as a teacher. He was an active leader in the Achena Presbyterian Church, a church his father founded in 1884.
Commemoration

Harjo was celebrated and recognized as a Seminole Code Talker. In November 2013, Harjo was honored as a World War II code talker by the U.S. Congress and the Seminole Tribe of Oklahoma was awarded a Congressional Gold Medal for their contributions to the war. Harjo was given a replica silver medal for his individual contribution. He was the only code talker able to attend the ceremony.

Edmond Andrew Harjo died of a heart attack on March 31, 2014, at the age of 96. He became the first veteran buried in the new Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Cemetery and Veterans Memorial and an imprint of his Congressional Medal is depicted at the entrance of the cemetery.


Bottom Left: Edmond Andrew Harjo’s headstone at Seminole Nation of Oklahoma Cemetery and Veterans Memorial in Seminole, Oklahoma, June 26, 2018. Courtesy of Amanda Kordeliski.

Bibliography


Edmond Andrew Harjo, Official Military Personnel File, Department of the Army, RG 319, National Archives and Records Administration - St. Louis.

Field Artillery; Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1917-, World War II Operations Reports 1941-1948, Record Group 407 (Box 16010); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.

Field Artillery; Records of the Adjutant General’s Office, 1917-, World War II Operations Reports 1941-1948, Record Group 407 (Box 16023); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.


Unit Annual Reports; Records of the Office of the Surgeon General (Army), World War II Administrative Records 1940-1949, Record Group 112 (Box 348); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.

Unit Histories, 1940-1967; Records of the U.S. Army Operational, Tactical, and Support Organizations (World War II and Thereafter), Record Group 338 (Box 1705); National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD.

Records for Edmond Andrew Harjo; World War II Army Enlistment Records, 1938-1946 [Electronic File], Record Group 64; National Archives at College Park, College Park, MD [retrieved from the Access to Archival Databases at http://aad.archives.gov/aad/series-description.jsp?series=3360&cat=WR26&bc=.sl, September 1, 2018].