

MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

Proudly Honors



HARRISON HUNTER

UNITED STATES ARMY

SERGEANT (E-5)

JANUARY 17, 1942 – JUNE 16, 1945

WOUNDED IN ACTION DECEMBER 5, 1943

AND NOVEMBER 1944

as

PURPLE HEART PATRIOT

JUNE 2025

John Corbett Eidson, Honoring His Grandfather's Service and Sacrifice

Sponsored by: Rock Island Chapter, NSDAR



Harrison Hunter was born on May 2, 1919, near Cushing Oklahoma. He had six siblings and was extremely close to his grandfather Henry. He was of the Sac and Fox Nation and did not speak English until going to first grade. He said it took him about a year to learn English. He told the story that he finished high school in one day. He went to school the first day entered the front door and out the back to get on a bus to go on a field trip and never returned.

Harrison's first job was driving a truck at age 14 for about two years. He then played semi-pro baseball in Kansas for a few years before joining the Army.

On January 17, 1942, he volunteered for the Army and was sent to Camp Roberts in California for basic training. He was assigned to the 32 Division as an Infantryman. After basic training, he was sent to Louisiana for maneuvers. He then traveled the United States including Massachusetts, Washington, and San Francisco where they slept at the Cow Palace in stalls before being shipped out to New Guinea.

It took 41 days to reach their headquarters after being left at the beach. The trip was grueling they had no trails to follow and had to make their own. They could not get supplies dropped to them so all they had to eat was what they could carry. They did not eat for three or four days at a time to conserve food. When they ate it was Bully Beef (corned beef) and rice, which might have gone rancid. Many men dropped out from sickness and had to be carried back.

Harrison was assigned reconnaissance or scouting missions because his complexion more closely matched the native people. His scouting party consisted of a Javanese, one Dutch, three Malayan natives as well as himself. They wore nondescript native clothing to more likely blend with the natives. They slipped five or 10 miles behind enemy lines and spent as much as a week at a time living on K-rations. They had plenty of narrow escapes trying to determine important fortifications and their location, number of troops, and any other vital facts that might help the war effort. He always indicated the Buna Campaign was the most grueling of the battles he was involved in.

In the Buna Campaign Sargent Hunter was wounded in the hand by a sniper on December 5, 1943. He was seriously wounded a second time when in Leyte, Philippines in November 1944. In his words, he "was waiting for the signal to jump off" in the attack when the enemy broke through the lines with 3 tanks, and he received a shower of shrapnel in the back. His spine and nerves were injured and he was paralyzed from the waist down. He was carried on a three-day trip to the evacuation hospital through the mountains by four natives. He then was placed in three hospitals in the Pacific area before being sent home by plane arriving in the States from New Guinea in 36 hours.

He convalesced at the McCloskey General Hospital in Temple, Texas, and it was a year and a half before he could walk. When Harrison entered the Army he was 6' 1" but after his injury healed he was 5' 11". Harrison earned the Purple Heart Medal, Oak Leaf Cluster Asiatic Pacific Service Ribbon with 5 battle stars, (for action at Sador, Aitape, Madang, Hollandia, and Morotai) Philippine Liberation Ribbon with 1 star, Combat Infantry Medal, Good Conduct Medal, and Presidential Unit Citation for Buna Campaign. He was discharged on June 16, 1945.

He held several jobs after his injury healed and became one of the leaders of the Sac and Fox Nation and a singer. Harrison dearly loved attending Pow Wows throughout North America. He died October 8, 1995, in Cushing, Oklahoma.