



Field Artillery



Edwin Jacob Kern
Private First Class U.S. Army
15 December 1942 – 3 November 1945

Edwin was born on 18 January 1921 in Lower Macungie Township, Pennsylvania, in the Village of East Texas. He attended grades 1–8 at the two-room schoolhouse in East Texas, and attended Emmaus High School in Emmaus, Pennsylvania, for one year. After his freshman year of high school, Edwin left school and went to work for Lehigh Structural Steel Company in Allentown, Pennsylvania. He worked there until he retired, except for the time he served on active duty in the Army. Edwin entered the Army as an enlistee on 15 December 1942 in Allentown, as a Private. He was sent to Fort Bliss, Texas, for basic training, and then to Camp Phillips, Kansas, for training in the Field Artillery. He left the States for overseas on 9 May 1944 for the European Theater, where he served in France, Germany, and Belgium. Edwin was wounded in one of his legs in Belgium on 23 December 1944, and initially he was sent to England for recuperation. He remained in England until March 1945, when he returned to the States for further recuperation at Crile General Hospital in Cleveland, Ohio. After about three months, he was reassigned to the Army Convalescent Hospital at Fort Story, Virginia. Edwin was discharged at Fort Story on 3 November 1945 as a Private First Class. In addition to the Purple Heart Medal that he earned, Edwin was awarded the American Campaign Medal, European-African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal. After his discharge, Edwin returned to his home in East Texas and resumed working for Lehigh Structural Steel until his retirement. Edwin married **Grace Lydia Heckman** (13 Feb 1920 – August 1990) in the late 1940s. Edwin had a stepdaughter, **Janell Cora Ann Heckman**. Edwin died on 4 October 2002. He is buried at St. Paul's Church Cemetery in Trexlertown, Pennsylvania, alongside Grace. His parents were **Jacob John Kern** (1878 – 1939), who served as Lehigh County Treasurer, and **Lillie M. Poh** (1877 – 1959). Edwin's brothers, **Oliver G. Kern** and **Wayne J. M. Kern**, also served in the Army during World War II.