

## A TIME TO REMEMBER



### *Milestones WWII: Answering the Call*

## DADDY'S GIRL


PATRICIA BROWNELL EMMETT, KS



**THIS IS NOT ABOUT** a boy-friend, fiancé, brother, son, or husband. It's about a dad, my dad. The story begins with Dad joining the Navy. The Army wouldn't draft him, because he was married with a child (me), but he wanted so badly to serve his country.

My world was crushed when he enlisted. None of my friends' dads were in the service, and I didn't understand why mine had to go. Mom said I near had a breakdown. Making matters worse, I was a daddy's girl, pure and simple.

Finally, the war was over,


and after three years, Dad was coming home. I was ecstatic. I stayed with my grandparents while Mom went to get him. They ended up spending the weekend together in Boston. At the time, I couldn't understand why she didn't just bring him right home. I do now! 

## MY FATHER GETS INDUCTED

JACK WARD SKINNER FARMINGTON, MO

**I WILL NEVER FORGET** that day, December 7, 1941. I was on my knees, leaning against the back of a stuffed chair, looking out the window of our home in St. Louis,

when the news came over the radio. I was only seven and didn't understand what was happening, but I sensed the real fear that the adults were feeling. To escape this dark cloud hanging over our heads, we went to a movie. Halfway through, the film stopped, the houselights came on, and the theater manager announced that all military leaves were canceled and personnel were to report back to their home bases. The remaining audience sat quietly, and then, one by one, we all got up and left too. The movie never resumed that night.

And so began four years of war and strife. My family moved to Fredericktown, Missouri, where Dad found a job until he was drafted. He had three brothers, all serving in the war. Two were in the Army, one was in the Army Air Corps, and Dad was in the Navy. My grandparents kept changing the little flags that hung in the window with a star in it; the final flag had four stars. I can't imagine how my grandmother Skinner felt with all her sons in the war. 

*Glenn Skinner, with wife Anna and son Jack, after basic training*



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*Milestones WWII: On the Home Front*

# LOSING AND FINDING MY FATHER

ANNE BLOCKER CANDLER, NC

EVERYBODY WAS OPTIMISTIC in 1945, sure that the war was coming to an end. Mother started making plans for the day when she received a notice that Dad, 1st Lt. Henry E. Cochran, would be coming home. A big all-day celebration would take place with family and friends.

I have several letters sent from Dad to us and other family members and have selected excerpts from two of them:



1st Lt. Henry Cochran (left) holding his daughter Anne

February 10, 1945: Dad wrote his mother from Germany.

*Dear Mamma, Just a few lines to let you know I'm all right. Hope you're getting along fine. From the letters from Margaret [my mom], Little Anne [me] is getting to be quite a little lady now. It'll be a wonderful day when we can all come back home. The situation looks pretty good, but honestly, it seems like this thing will never end. We've been expecting it lately, but it looks as though we're going to have to fight for every foot of Germany. Well—we can do it, but it might be costly. I heard from Lewis [Dad's brother, also in the Army, stationed in France], and I hope we can get together before too much longer.*

February 14, 1945: Dad wrote Mother's parents from Germany:

*Dear Folks, I'm really sorry about not writing sooner, but a poor GI is kept pretty busy over here. There is much I want to say that I can't find the words to express. It's bad enough to be so far away from Margaret and Anne, but if I had the worries some of these men have, I guess I would go crazy. You are so swell to take care of them for me, and I am proud of the fact that I have the finest wife and baby in the whole world. We are sure it won't be long now, and we will be coming home. I want to take care of you both the way you have my wonderful family.*

On March 2, 1945, as Dad walked down a street in Düsseldorf, a sniper shot from an apartment window and killed him. Suddenly, our merry plans for a homecoming turned into a grief-stricken time of mourning. Dad was buried in Holland. 