



Edwin Charles Marsteller
Chief Petty Officer Merchant Marine/U.S. Coast Guard
8 March 1943 – 2 January 1946

Edwin was born on 7 January 1925 in Shimersville in Upper Milford Township, Pennsylvania. He was the third of seven children and the first of three sons born to **Edwin Jonas Marsteller** (24 April 1901 – 16 Sept. 1963) and **Emma Elnora Dreas** (19 Jan. 1906 – 6 Nov. 1973). The family later moved to Trexlertown, Pennsylvania, in Upper Macungie Township where they lived while Edwin attended grade school in Fogelsville, Pennsylvania, from 1931 to 1939. After grade school, Edwin initially worked on his father's farm and later at the Brown Shoe Factory in Allentown as a Last Puller. He then enlisted in the Merchant Marine on 8 March 1943, and underwent training in a simulated engine room as a Fireman, Oiler, and Water Tender at Sheepshead Bay in Brooklyn, New York. Edwin went on active duty on 7 June 1943 as a Seaman/Fireman-Water Tender in the U.S. Coast Guard, to which the Merchant Marine was attached during World War II. He then served aboard four merchant ships that convoyed personnel and supplies across the Atlantic Ocean from the States and into the Mediterranean Sea. They were *SS Hannis Taylor* (7 June 1943 to 30 December 1943); *SS Andrew A. Humphreys* (1 February 1944 to 16 March 1944); *SS Bernard Carter* (8 April 1944 to 5 January 1945); and *SS Edwin L. Godkin* (12 April 1945 to 15 August 1945), on which he served as Oiler and later as Senior Engineer. While in the Mediterranean, *Hannis Taylor* participated in Allied D-Day operations at the invasion of Sicily, and both *Andrew A. Humphreys* and *Bernard Carter* supported Allied operations at Salerno, Naples, and Brindisi in Southern Italy. *Godkin* initially supported operations in Italy, and was later dispatched to England where she prepared for and landed troops on Omaha and Utah Beaches during and after the invasion at Normandy, France. After Victory in Europe was declared, she loaded troops at Marseilles, France, bound for duty in the Pacific. She transited the Panama Canal and headed for Japan via Hawaii and Guam. At Guam word of Japan's surrender was received by *Godkin*, and she was diverted to Batangas in the Philippines to bring troops home for discharge. For his wartime service, Edwin was awarded the Merchant Marine Combat Bar, Atlantic War Zone Medal, Mediterranean-Middle East War Zone Medal, and Merchant Marine Victory Medal. Edwin left *Godkin* on 15 August 1945, and was released from active duty as a Chief Petty Officer in the Coast Guard on 15 September 1945. He continued in the Merchant Marine, working as a Throttleman until 2 January 1946. He left the Merchant Marine at Galveston, Texas, and had to find his own way home because he didn't have enough points accumulated to get paid for travel home. He returned to Trexlertown to continue work at the Brown Shoe Factory for about a year before becoming a Truck Driver on a retail baker route for Freihofer Bakery in Allentown until 1950. He then became a self-employed Barber until 1996, at which time he began to work part time on Fridays and Saturdays as a Barber at Renninger's Market in Kutztown, Pennsylvania. Edwin also served as Justice of the Peace in Upper Macungie Township from 1955 to 1967 and as Tax Collector for Upper Macungie Township from 1968 to 1976. Edwin married **Ruth Eleanor Bleiler** (born 27 October 1923) on 19 January 1946 in Ziegels Union Church in Breinigsville, Pennsylvania. Edwin and Ruth lived in Wescosville until 1949, when they moved to Breinigsville. In April 2004, they moved to Lower Macungie Township where they settled. Edwin and Ruth had three children: **Emery Adam**, **Annette Marie**, and **Bonita Ruth**. Edwin's brother, **Paul Harvey Marsteller**, served in the Army during World War II, and was on active duty from 1944 to 1947.