

Edward John Seidel

March 6, 1915 – September 1, 1996

World War II

VA



**U.S. Department
of Veterans Affairs**

National Cemetery
Administration



**Department
of History**

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

Edward John Seidel (March 6, 1915–September 1, 1996)

By Hampton Hovey

Early Life: New York and Virginia

On March 6, 1915, John and Anna Seidel gave birth to their only son, Edward John Seidel, in Buffalo, New York. The 1915 New York State Census shows Edward as a newborn baby with his father John working as a machinist, most likely for the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad Company while his mother was a housewife.¹ The Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad formed from a series of mergers, consolidations, and leases, eventually serving the New York City and Buffalo trunk line by 1882.² By 1920, Edward and his parents moved to Groveland, New York where his father continued as a railroad machinist for the railroad company.³

By 1930, Edward's parents divorced and Edward and his father John moved in with John's mother Carrie. The 1930 Census lists Edward, now fifteen and still in school, living at his grandmother's home in Buffalo. John continued working as a machinist.⁴ After completing high school by 1935, Seidel moved to Virginia to work for the US Government in the Department of Agriculture.⁵ During the 1930s, the agency assisted rural farmers and communities hurt by poverty and lower crop prices under President Franklin Roosevelt's New Deal programs.⁶ On March 5, 1938, Seidel married Mildred Lunsford in Forestville, Maryland and by the 1940 Census, Seidel and his wife settled in Falls Church, Virginia, near Washington, D.C., where the couple worked for the US government. Edward served as a clerk within the Department of Agriculture while Mildred worked as an elevator conductor.⁷ In the past, elevators were operated by people who trained to perform the task; passengers did not just push a button to move from floor to floor.⁸ The couple soon welcomed a son, Lance, by 1941 and a daughter, Mary Ann, by 1943.⁹

Service: Seidel in the Army

On July 1, 1940, Congress passed the Selective Training and Service Act, establishing the first peacetime draft in US history and requiring all males between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-six to register for the draft. The act took effect on October 16, 1940 and over sixteen million men, including Seidel, registered. The law also ensured that no more than 900,000 men

trained at any one time.¹⁰ In 1940, Seidel, age twenty-five, registered, listing his employment at the Department of Agriculture.¹¹ After the United States entered World War II in December of 1941, single men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-five filled many of the first draftees. However, after July 1, 1943, eighteen year olds, as well as fathers, soon received draft notices. Twenty-seven was the average age of those drafted during World War II.¹² Seidel, the father of two young children, initially did not receive a draft notice; however, on March 9, 1945, he enlisted in the military in Richmond, Virginia. He eventually served in the US Army, holding the rank of private.¹³

At the time of his enlistment in March of 1945, the Allied Forces inched closer to victory in the war in Europe with the German surrender coming two months later on May 7, 1945.¹⁴ Now focused solely on the Japanese, the United States sent more troops to the Pacific to prepare for the invasion of Japan. The atomic bombings of Japan, as well as the Soviet Union's declaration of war prompted the Japanese surrender on September 2, 1945.¹⁵ While it is not known if Seidel served at home or overseas, he served as a soldier in the Army, ready to defend his country. On May 1, 1946, the Army discharged Seidel.¹⁶

Post War: Family and Work

After his discharge, Seidel returned to Virginia, working for the federal government. The family continued to grow as Seidel and his wife Mildred welcomed two more sons, Walter in 1949 and Daniel in 1951, part of a national trend of babies born in the postwar era. The family continued to reside in Falls Church. Ultimately, after two years of separation, Edward and his wife divorced on September 25, 1967.¹⁷ Edward then married Harriet Bender in Arlington, Virginia.¹⁸ At the time, both worked for the government, Edward as an administrative assistant while Harriet worked as a secretary.¹⁹ The family later settled in Delaware during the 1970s and 1980s before moving to Florida by 1992. They lived in Haines City and later in Vero Beach by 1995.²⁰ On September 1, 1996, Seidel passed away at the age of eighty-one.²¹ Officials at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida placed a memorial headstone in honor of Seidel and his service. Through his work for the federal government as well as his tenure in the Army, Seidel reflects a life of service to his country as a soldier and a government worker.

Endnotes

- 1 “1915 State Population Census,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://www.ancestry.com> (accessed March 25, 2017), entry for John Seidel, Election District: 02; Assembly District: 04; City: Buffalo Ward 11; County: Erie; Page: 21.
- 2 “Lackawanna Railroad,” *Erie Lackawanna Historical Society, Inc.*, October 14, 2012, accessed July 28, 2017, <http://www.erielackhs.org/index.php/railroads9/dlw>.
- 3 “1920 United States Census,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://www.ancestry.com> (accessed March 25, 2017), entry for John Seidel, Groveland, Livingston, New York; Roll: T625_1118; Page: 1A; Enumeration District: 44.
- 4 “1930 United States Census,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://www.ancestry.com> (accessed March 25, 2017) entry for Edward Seidel, Buffalo, Erie, New York; Roll: 1423; Page: 26A; Enumeration District: 0080.
- 5 “1940 United States Census,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://www.ancestry.com> (accessed March 25, 2017), entry for Edward Seidel, Falls Church, Fairfax, Virginia; Roll: T627_4261; Page: 28A; Enumeration District: 30-9.
- 6 “Department of Agriculture,” AllGov, accessed July 28, 2017, <http://www.allgov.com/departments/departments-of-agriculture?detailsDepartmentID=568>.
- 7 “Virginia Divorce Records 1918-2014,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://www.ancestry.com> (accessed March 25, 2017), entry for Edward John Seidel and Mildred Lunsford, Falls Church, Fairfax, Virginia.
- 8 Lubomir Janovsky, *Elevator Mechanical Design* (Mobile, AL: Elevator World, Inc., 2004).
- 9 “Virginia, Marriage Records, 1936-2014,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://ancestry.com> (accessed July 27, 2017), entry for Lance Edward Seidel and Barbara Ellen Messec, June 15, 1963; entry for Mary Ann Seidel and Edward Lawrence Synan, May 24, 1968.
- 10 James Gilbert Ryan and Leonard C. Schlup, *Historical Dictionary of the 1940s* (New York: Routledge, 2015), 349.
- 11 “U.S. WWII Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://ancestry.com> (accessed 25 Jul 2017), entry for Edward John Seidel.
- 12 Michael C. C. Adams, *The Best War Ever: America and World War II* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2015), 52.
- 13 “Electronic Army Serial Number Merged File, ca. 1938-1946 (Enlistment Records),” database, The National Archives, Access to Archival Database (<https://aad.archives.gov/aad/record-detail.jsp?dt=893&mtch=2&cat=all&tf=F&q=Edward+J.+Seidel&bc=&rpp=10&pg=1&rid=4316070&rlst=3028226,4316070> : accessed March 25, 2017) entry for Edward John Seidel, Army Serial Number 33865675.
- 14 Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History, Volume II: The United States Army in a Global Era, 1917-2008, vol. 2, United States Army in a Global Era, 1917-2008* (Washington, D.C.: Library of Congress, 2009), 164.

15 Ibid., 2:199.

16 “U.S., Department of Veterans Affairs BIRLS Death File, 1850-2010,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://ancestry.com> (accessed July 25, 2017), entry for Edward John Seidel.

17 “Virginia, Marriage Records, 1936-2014,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://ancestry.com> (accessed July 27, 2017), entry for Walter John Seidel and Sharon Elaine Corbin, August 7, 1976; “U.S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 1,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://ancestry.com> (accessed July 27, 2017), entry for Daniel E. Seidel.

18 “Virginia Divorce Records 1918-2014,” *Ancestry.com*.

19 “Virginia Marriage Records 1918-2014,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://www.ancestry.com> (accessed March 25, 2017), entry for Edward John Seidel Harriet Bender, September 25, 1967.

20 “U.S. Public Records Index, 1950-1993, Volume 1,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://ancestry.com> (accessed July 27, 2017), entry for Edward Seidel; 1979, 1988, 1992, 1995.

21 “Florida Death Index, 1877-1998,” database, *Ancestry.com*, <https://ancestry.com> (accessed July, 27, 2017), entry for Edward John Seidel.

Mar 23, 1945

many of houses

FLORIDA STATE POPULATION CENSUS, 1945

PRECINCT No. 116	NAME	ADDRESS	COUNTY	White	RACE	AGE	SEX	PLACE OF BIRTH	EDUCATION	OCCUPATION
	Williams, Geo Robt	2828 13 th St N	Pa	60	Englnd	single	Retired			
	Williams Mrs Joseph	"	"	40	Pa	"	"			
	unoccupied	2838 13 th St N	Pa							
	Trafton, W J	2904 13 th St N	Pa	40	Pa	"	"			
	Trafton Mrs J	"	"	40	Pa	"	"			
	Pellington, S R	2920 13 th St N	Pa	60	Pa	College	Insurance			
	Pellington Mrs S R	"	"	60	Pa	"	"			
	Pellington Mrs Margaret	"	"	23	Pa	High	Retail Tech			
	Ruedrich, James J	2828 12 th St N	Pa	27	Pa	College	Bank Teller			
	Ruedrich Mrs J	"	"	21	Pa	"	"			
	Ruedrich James Jr	"	"	1	Pa	"	Infant			
out	Braun Mrs Donald	2934 13 th St N	Pa	27	Pa	"	"			
	Davis Mrs Everett	2939 13 th St N	Pa	68	Pa	High	Retired			
	Davis Mrs Everett	"	"	50	Pa	"	"			
	Kiefer Mrs Emily	2827 13 th St N	Pa	40	Pa	College	Insurance			
	Kiefer Charles W	"	"	45	Pa	College	Student			
	Kiefer Robert C	"	"	19	Pa	College	Student			
	Kiefer Elizabeth J	"	"	17	Pa	High	Child			
	Kiefer James J	"	"	5	Pa	"	"			
	Weaver James W	1227 13 th St N	Pa	60	Pa	High	Lawyer			
	Weaver Mrs J W	"	"	60	Pa	"	"			
	Wendover James	2828	Pa	101	Pa	College	Doctor			
	Wendover Dr Joseph	2836 12 th St N	Pa	50	Pa	"	"			
	Wendover Emma R	"	"	50	Pa	High	Chemist			
	Dupont Joseph J	2842 12 th St N	Pa	50	Pa	"	"			
	Dupont Mrs Joseph J	"	"	40	Pa	"	"			
	Soderburg Mrs Sode	"	"	60	Swedish	"	"			
	Soderburg Mrs Sode	"	"	30	Swedish	"	"			
	Soderburg Mrs Sode	"	"	30	Swedish	"	"			
	Salce Mrs	2904 12 th St N	Pa	50	Pa	College	Retired			
	Salce Mrs	2912 12 th St N	Pa	50	Pa	"	"			
	Rushnell James A	"	"	50	Pa	"	"			
	Rushnell Mrs James A	"	"	50	Pa	"	"			
	Porter Mrs J W	2819 12 th St N	Pa	45	Pa	High	"			
	Wiley Mrs Mary J	2816 13 th St N	Pa	40	Pa	High	"			
	Wiley Mrs Mary J	"	"	40	Pa	College	"			
	Rourke Mrs Lode	"	"	30	Pa	"	"			
	Moats Mrs Mildred H	1137 28 th Ave N	Pa	40	Pa	High	Lawyer			
	Moats Mrs Mildred H	"	"	40	Pa	High	Retired			
	Hessing Geo W	"	"	60	Pa	"	"			
	Hessing Mrs Geo W	"	"	60	Pa	"	"			
	Smith Mrs Henry M	1101 28 th Ave N	Pa	50	Pa	High	Retired			
	Smith Mrs Henry M	"	"	40	Pa	"	"			
	Smith Mrs Henry M	"	"	40	Pa	"	"			
	Evans Mrs Betty	"	"	21	Pa	"	"			
	Evans Mrs Betty	"	"	8	Pa	Grade	Student			
	Evans Mrs Betty	"	"	8	Pa	Grade	Student			
	Evans Mrs Betty	"	"	8	Pa	Grade	Student			
	Evans Mrs Betty	"	"	8	Pa	Grade	Student			
	Randall Mrs W M	2808 11 th St N	Pa	71	Pa	High	"			
	Randall Mrs W M	"	"	53	Pa	"	"			
	Randall Mrs W M	"	"	53	Pa	"	"			
	Seidell Mrs Robert	2807 1/2 "	Pa	30	Pa	College	Surgeon			
	Seidell Mrs Robert	"	"	30	Pa	"	"			
	Seidell Mrs Robert	2816 11 th St N	Pa	76	Pa	High	Retired			
	Seidell Mrs Robert	"	"	76	Pa	"	"			

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0-0	7 TO 15	15 TO 20	20	27	14	24	35	3	1	1
1-1	M	F	T	S	M	F	T	S	M	F
2-0	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

SERIAL NUMBER		1. NAME (Print)			ORDER NUMBER	
3587		EDWARD John SEIDEL			5484	
		(First) (Middle) (Last)				
2. ADDRESS (Print)						
104 WEST ST. W. FALLS CHURCH VA.						
(Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)						
3. TELEPHONE		4. AGE IN YEARS		5. PLACE OF BIRTH		6. COUNTRY OF CITIZENSHIP
7.C. 1911-R		25		Buffalo		U.S.
(Exchange) (Number)		DATE OF BIRTH		(Town or county)		(State or country)
		Mar. 6 1915		New York		
		(Mo.) (Day) (Yr.)				
7. NAME OF PERSON WHO WILL ALWAYS KNOW YOUR ADDRESS					8. RELATIONSHIP OF THAT PERSON	
Mrs. Mildred Eutha Seidel					Wife	
(Mr., Mrs., Miss) (First) (Middle) (Last)						
9. ADDRESS OF THAT PERSON						
104 West St. W. Falls Church, Va.						
(Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)						
10. EMPLOYER'S NAME						
Dept. of Agriculture						
11. PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT OF BUSINESS						
Washington, D.C.						
(Number and street or R. F. D. number) (Town) (County) (State)						
I AFFIRM THAT I HAVE VERIFIED ABOVE ANSWERS AND THAT THEY ARE TRUE.						
REGISTRATION CARD D. S. S. FORM 1			Edward J. Seidel			
			(Registrant's signature)			

