

Mr. Russell Strong  
October 19, 1990  
Page 2

A brief Obituary: Joseph W. Pedersen, 2nd Lt. 367th pilot, arrived Thurleigh, England in early May, 1944. He was shot down June 17, 1944 on his 17th mission. He was captured July 25, 1944 at Auver-sur-Montfecon and sent to Buchenwald Concentration Camp August 20, 1944. He arrived Stalag Luft III on October 19, 1944. He was liberated at Moosberg April 29, 1945. He was a graduate of Gonzaga University, the father of 8 children, Kellogg Company executive. He died suddenly of a heart attack on July 23, 1986 at the age of 64 (5 days before his 65th birthday).

Your July 1990 issue of Echoes has an article on Robert Starzynski who was shot down on the same mission as my father.

I am awaiting copies of depositions my father gave in 1945 for the Nuremberg War Crimes trials. There are two deposition transcripts dealing with mistreatment of POW's during transport and atrocities committed at Buchenwald. If you wish, I will forward copies to you.

Sincerely,



Charles K. Pedersen

October 19, 1990

Mr. Russell Strong  
5323 Cheval Place  
Charlotte, NC 28205

Dear Mr. Strong:

I need your help and expertise in determining the identity of a B-17G. The photo, which is attributed to you, appears in 8th Air Force Album by J.H. Woolnough. It is on page 36, or at least in sequence at page 36 as the page numbers are missing from some pages.

The B-17 in question is in a group of four that are bombing. The aircraft letter is K. My reading of the serial number is 4297278. This serial number matches my father's plane, the "Umbriago," which was shot down on September 12, 1944 under the command of 1st Lt. Charles C. Wegener from the 367th.

My father, Joseph W. Pedersen, was shot down on June 17, 1944 near Le Mans while flying B17G 4238163. Do you know if this plane had a name? The "Umbriago" was the regular plane my father flew, but had been damaged severely on a mission earlier in June. I don't know which mission this was but I do know that the control cables had been shot out by flak. My father and his co-pilot, Jimmy Blood, flew back to Thurleigh and landed using the auto-pilot for control. My father said Blood ran the flaps, landing gear and yaw control while he controlled the throttles and pitch control. He never flew the "Umbriago" after this mission as he was shot down before it was repaired.

I have not written to update your records. My father died in July of 1986. I see he is still listed in the 306th directory. I am enclosing a check for \$25 and asking that future issues of Echoes be addressed to me, Charles K. Pedersen, 1453 S.E. Division, Portland, OR 97202.

21 December 1990

Charles K. Pedersen  
1453 SE Division  
Portland, OR 97202

Dear Chuck:

Now, two months later I get around to answering your letter.

First, let me thank you for the detailed information you provided on your late father. Such data is very useful in fleshing out the personnel records on men of the 306th.

Ultimately, my extensive collection of 306th materials will be placed in the library of the USAF Academy, Colorado Springs, CO, providing future generations of cadets with an invaluable research source on a WWII bomb group. Once our Mission Report collection is completed we will have materials that no other WWII has been able to accumulate.

I do not have a picture of Umbriago, and have searched a great many places for one. As to the picture you mentioned, I'll have to find that 8th AF Album and see if I can match it up.

I'll keep working at it and try to surprise you one of these days.

Thanks, again for the information.

All the best,

State of Washington )  
County of Spokane ) SS

I, Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt., Air Corps, O-809865, of lawful age, being duly sworn on oath, state that I have read the foregoing transcription of my interrogation, consisting of two pages, including the title page, and that all answers contained therein are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Joseph Warren Pedersen  
Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt.  
O-809865

Subscribed and sworn to before me this 27th day of September 1945,  
at  Ft. George Wright, Washington.

Raymond L. Henley  
RAYMOND L. HENLEY  
Captain, M. A. C.  
Adjutant

### C E R T I F I C A T E

I, Wallace Cathcart, Jr., Special Agent, SIC, NSO, certify that Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt., Air Corps, O-809865, personally appeared before me on the nineteenth day of September 1945 and testified concerning war crimes; and that the foregoing is an accurate transcription of the answers given by him to the several questions set forth.

Wallace Cathcart, Jr.  
Wallace Cathcart, Jr.,  
Special Agent, SIC, NSO.

-3-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, AND 735

By REB/pe NARA, Date 11/23/80.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

clothes. They turned me over to the Gestapo at Le Mans, France. I was held by them in solitary confinement for fourteen days. I was then moved to Paris, arriving there on 8 August 1944. I was held in a prison for seven days. On 15 August 1944 I was entrained for a five day trip to Buchenwald, Germany. On 20 August 1944 I was sent to the concentration camp at Buchenwald, where I remained until 19 October 1944, when I was moved to Stalag Luft III, Sagan, Germany by train. I arrived in Sagan on 21 October 1944 and remained there until 29 January 1945. On that date we departed from Sagan on foot to Spremberg, Germany where we entrained on the 1st or 2nd of February 1945 for Nurnberg, Germany. After arriving in Nurnberg on 4 February 1945, I was assigned to Stalag Luft III at XIII-D, where I remained until 4 April 1945 when we marched to Moosburg, Germany, arriving on 13 April 1945. Here I was assigned to Stalag VII-A, where I remained until 29 April 1945 when I was liberated by the Third United States Army.

- Q. How were you transported from Paris to Buchenwald?
- A. By train in French and German box cars. In the French cars the Germans crowded in seventy individuals and in the German cars ninety. There were about three thousand people in our train, some cars contained nothing but French women.
- Q. Were you fed on the trip?
- A. The Germans furnished us only bread, but the French Red Cross fed us.
- Q. Describe the trip.
- A. We were let out of the cars once a day. With seventy men in the car there was no room to sit. We remained standing for five days. During the trip nine tenths of the men got dysentery. There were no provisions for sanitation. No toilets or pails. On the third night, five Americans escaped from the train. From then on we were forbidden to look out the windows. The next day a Frenchman in the car ahead of us put his head out of the window. The Germans shot him in the hand, and then inquired if anyone was hurt. When the man stepped forward, they shot him in the back, head and chest. There were four shots in all. They then made five prisoners bury him. They took thirty-five men out of the car and threatened to shoot them. They finally stripped them for 24 hours. I know the name and address of one of the American officers in that car, 1st Lt. William Ryherd, 2313 Olympic Drive, Bakersfield, California. I would estimate that every man making that trip lost about ten pounds after standing up for five days straight.
- Q. Who was the German officer in charge of this trip?
- A. I don't know his name, but I can describe him. He was a Wehrmacht Major, about 43 years old, five feet seven inches tall, about 135 pounds, very slender build, black hair, dark eyes, very dark complexion, his eyes slanted, he almost looked Asiatic. He was very Prussian in his military bearing. He was responsible for the train and the conditions that existed on it.
- Q. Do you remember any other Americans besides Lt. Ryherd that made this trip with you?
- A. I remember one, 1st Lt. Miles King from Boston, Massachusetts.
- Q. Can you remember any additional details concerning the matters testified about in this deposition?
- A. No.

*Joseph Warren Pedersen*  
Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt.  
O-809865.

-2-

**CONFIDENTIAL**

DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, 11/17/75 02-17.

By REB/p, NARA, Date 11/23/90.

For the WAR CRIMES OFFICE

Judge Advocate General's Department — War Department

United States of America

9SC-WC-2096

\*\*\*\*\*

In the matter of transporting French and Allied prisoners of war from Paris, France to Buchenwald, Germany, during the period from 15 to 20 August 1944. \* Perpetuation of Testimony of Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt., Air Corps, O-809865.

\*\*\*\*\*

Taken at: Army Air Forces Regional and Convalescent Hospital, Ft. George Wright, Washington,

Date: 19 September 1945.

Questions by: Wallace Cathcart, Jr., Special Agent, SIC, NSC.

Q. Please state your name, rank, serial number, birthplace and date of birth.

A. Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt., Air Corps, O-809865. I was born in New York City, New York on 28 July 1921.

Q. Where did you attend school and when did you finish?

A. I attended school in San Francisco, California, graduating from Balboa High School in 1939.

Q. Where were you employed before you entered the army?

A. Bethlehem Steel Corp., San Francisco, California.

Q. When did you enter the army?

A. 17 September 1942.

Q. What is your permanent home address?

A. 85 Richland Avenue, San Francisco, California.

Q. Are you married or single?

A. Married.

Q. Where are you now stationed and what is your present status?

A. I am a convalescent patient at the Army Air Force Hospital, Fort George Wright, Washington.

Q. Have you recently been returned to the United States from overseas?

A. Yes, 29 May 1945 at Boston, Massachusetts. I was a passenger on the USS Marine Raven.

Q. Were you held as a prisoner of war by the Germans?

A. Yes.

Q. When and where were you held as a prisoner of war?

A. I was shot down on 17 June 1944 at Loue, France. With the assistance of some French civilians, I was able to avoid capture until 25 July 1944. On that date I was captured by Luftwaffe personnel while I was in civilian

-1-

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

*JWP*

DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, AND 735027.

By RLB/da, NARA, Date 11/23/90.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

**CONFIDENTIAL**

State of

County of

} 80

I, Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt., Air Corps, O-809865, of lawful age, being duly sworn on oath, state that I have read the foregoing transcription of my interrogation, consisting of two pages, including the title page, and that all answers contained therein are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt.  
O-809865.

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1945,  
at \_\_\_\_\_.

**C E R T I F I C A T E**

I, Wallace Cathcart, Jr., Special Agent, SIC, NSC, certify that Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt., Air Corps, O-809865, personally appeared before me on the nineteenth day of September 1945 and testified concerning war crimes; and that the foregoing is an accurate transcription of the answers given by him to the several questions set forth.

Wallace Cathcart, Jr.,  
Special Agent, SIC, NSC.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

to Paris, arriving there on 8 August 1944. I was held in a prison for seven days. On 15 August 1944 I was entrained for a five day trip to Buchenwald, Germany. On 20 August 1944 I was sent to the concentration camp at Buchenwald, where I remained until 19 October 1944, when I was moved to Stalag Luft III, Sagan, Germany by train. I arrived in Sagan on 21 October 1944 and remained there until 29 January 1945. On that date we departed from Sagan on foot to Spremberg, Germany where we were entrained on the 1st or 2nd of February 1945 for Nurnberg, Germany. After arriving in Nurnberg on 4 February 1945, I was assigned to Stalag Luft III at XIII-D, where I remained until 4 April 1945 when we marched to Moosburg, Germany, arriving on 13 April 1945. Here I was assigned to Stalag VII-A, where I remained until 4 April 1945 when we marched to Moosburg, Germany, arriving on 13 April 1945. Here I was assigned to Stalag VII-A, where I remained until 29 April 1945 when I was liberated by the Third United States Army.

Q. What were the conditions at the concentration camp at Buchenwald, Germany?

A. When we first arrived we received a shower, were shaved completely from head to foot and issued new clothing. We received no shoes. It was two weeks before we received shoes. During that time we were forced to walk around barefooted. It was cold rainy weather. No barracks or blankets were provided for us for the first two weeks of our stay. We were forced to sleep out in the open, even during the rain. After two weeks, 750 prisoners were assigned to a barracks. There was no room for more than 400 men in these barracks. We were forced to sleep on the floor and tables. The water in the camp was not fit to drink. Dysentery was prevalent as a result. There were no facilities to boil water. We received only one fourth of a kilo loaf of bread a day, dehydrated vegetable soup once a day, and a couple of potatoes twice a week. We received no Red Cross packages and were told that the Red Cross was not allowed in this camp. As a result of this diet I lost about thirty pounds. Two men, a British Pilot Officer, Philip Jennings, and an American P-38 pilot, named 1st Lt. Beck from Los Angeles, California, both died of pneumonia as a direct result of that first two weeks' exposure. One day I witnessed 25 Russian civilians being beaten with whips for a half hour. On the 41st day of our stay while we were still in the open, the 8th Air Force knocked out a V-2 plant 100 yards from our stockade. One Englishman was hit by falling flak. Every bomb hit the target area, but we realized that we had been used by the Germans as protection for the plant. We were forced to fight fire at the site of the V-2 factory in our bare feet, and with constant threat of exploding explosives. No prisoners were killed, but many got burns on their feet because they had no shoes.

Q. Do you know the German commander in charge of this camp?

A. I think his name was Koch. I never saw him.

Q. Who were some of the Americans confined in the camp with you?

A. 2nd Lt. William Powell, 160 Yale Avenue, Waterbury, Conn. S/Sgt. Robert Johnson, 662 South Street, Roslindale, Mass.; 1st Lt. Mosier and 1st Lt. Nestine of the State of Washington.

Q. Can you remember any additional details concerning the matters you have testified to in this deposition?

A. No.

Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt.  
O-609865.

-2-

**CONFIDENTIAL**

DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, AND 735 027.

By RLB/da, NARA, Date 11/23/90.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES



**CONFIDENTIAL**

For the WAR CRIMES OFFICE

Judge Advocate General's Department -- War Department

United States of America 98C-NC-2094

In the matter of improper imprisonment  
of Allied prisoners of war at Buchenwald,  
Germany's concentration camp, between  
20 August to 19 October 1944.

Perpetuation of Testimony of  
Joseph Warren Pedersen,  
2nd Lt., Air Corps, G-809865.

Taken at: Army Air Forces Regional and Convalescent Hospital, Ft. George  
Wright, Washington.

Date: 19 September 1945.

Questions by: Wallace Cathcart, Jr., Special Agent, SIO, MSC.

Q. Please state your name, rank, serial number, birthplace and date of birth.

A. Joseph Warren Pedersen, 2nd Lt., Air Corps, G-809865. I was born in  
New York City, New York on 28 July 1921.

Q. Where did you attend school and when did you finish?

A. I attended school in San Francisco, California, graduating from Balboa  
High School in 1939.

Q. Where were you employed before you entered the army?

A. Bethlehem Steel Corp., San Francisco, California.

Q. What is your permanent home address?

A. 85 Richland Avenue, San Francisco, California.

Q. Are you married or single?

A. Married.

Q. Where are you now stationed and what is your present status?

A. I am a convalescent patient at the Army Air Forces Hospital, Fort George  
Wright, Washington.

Q. Have you recently been returned to the United States from overseas?

A. Yes, 29 May 1945 at Boston, Massachusetts. I was a passenger on the  
USS Marine Raven.

Q. Were you held as a prisoner of war by the Germans?

A. Yes.

Q. When and where were you held as a prisoner of war?

A. I was shot down on 17 June 1944 at Loue, France. With the assistance of  
some French civilians, I was able to avoid capture until 29 July 1944.  
On that date I was captured by Luftwaffe personnel while I was in civilian  
clothes. They turned me over to the Gestapo at La Haas, France. I was  
held by them in solitary confinement for fourteen days. I was then moved

**CONFIDENTIAL**

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~  
**WAR CRIMES OF PRISONERS**

When completed this document must be classified as **SECRET**

DATE: May 23 19 45

YOUR NAME: PEDERSEN Joseph Wagner  
Last First Middle

RANK: 2nd Lt. Serial NO. 0-809565  
(If civilian, write in words "Civilian") (Armed Forces personnel only)

PERMANENT HOME ADDRESS 85 Richland Ave., San Francisco Calif  
Street No. City State

AT WHAT ENEMY CAMPS AND HOSPITALS WERE YOU CONFINED AND WHEN WERE YOU AT EACH?  
(If never a prisoner of war or interned, then state principal places you have been from time to time while overseas).

Konzentrationslager Buchenwald - August 20, 1944 - Oct. 19, 1944  
Stalag Luft III - Sagan, Germany - Oct. 21, 1944 - Jan. 28, 1945  
Stalag Luft III at ZUL D Nurnberg - February 4 - April 4, 1945  
Stalag VII A - April 13 - May 3, 1945

DO YOU HAVE ANY INFORMATION ABOUT ANY ATROCITIES AGAINST, OR MISTREATMENT OF AMERICANS, PRISONERS OF WAR, CIVILIAN INTERNEES, OR THE CIVILIAN POPULATION FOR WHICH YOU THINK THE PERPETRATORS SHOULD BE PUNISHED? (Answer by stating YES or NO in the spaces provided below).

- (a) Killings or executions----- Yes or no
- (b) Torture, beatings or other cruelties----- Yes
- (c) Imprisonment under improper conditions----- Yes
- (d) Massacres, wholesale looting or burning of towns----- Yes or no
- (e) Use of prisoners of war on enemy military works or operations----- Yes or no
- (f) Exposure of prisoners of war to danger of gunfire, bombing, torpedoing, or other hazards of war----- Yes
- (g) Transportation of prisoners of war under improper conditions----- Yes
- (h) Public exhibition or exposure to ridicule of prisoners of war----- Yes
- (i) Failure to provide prisoners of war with proper medical care, food or quarters----- Yes
- (j) Collective punishment of a group for offense of others----- Yes or no
- (k) Any other atrocities not specifically mentioned above for which you think the guilty persons should be punished Yes

IF ANY QUESTION IS ANSWERED YES, THEN STATE THE FACTS BRIEFLY ON REVERSE SIDE OF THIS SHEET.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED PER EXECUTIVE ORDER 12356, SECTION 3.3, AND 735 027.

By RUB/ NARA, Date 11/23/80

NATIONAL ARCHIVES

NATIONAL ARCHIVE

SECRET

DETAILS OF ATROCITIES

KIND OF CRIME	WHERE IT HAPPENED	WHO WAS THE VICTIM (Include name, nationality & whether military personnel or not).	STATE IF YOU SAW IT YOURSELF. IF YOU DID NOT SEE IT, WHO TOLD YOU ABOUT IT?
1.	item (b) Buchenwald.	25 Russians (names unknown)	I saw
			25 Russian civilian prisoners (German classification "political") beaten with whips for approximately 30 minutes by members of the SS. Commandant & Assistant Commandant - Schmidt and Koch.
2.	item (c) Buchenwald conditions already mentioned.	item (f) Buchenwald - August 24 1944	8th Air Force
			V-2 installations within 200 yds. We (Anglo-American flying personnel) were made to put out fires before all clear sounded. We were bare footed and many suffered burns and various other foot injuries.
3.	item (g) Five days and nights	enclosed in small French box car. 72 men.	Dysentery prevalent.
			item (h) All Anglo-American personnel at Buchenwald were compelled to be shorn of all hair on their bodies except eyebrows & lashes. We were two weeks without shoes or shelter or blankets.
			item (i) Dysentery prevalent at Buchenwald. No drinking water provided.
5.	Buchenwald	item (k) Flight Officer Phillip Hennings (P.A.F.)	died of
			Rheumatic fever. This condition caused by exposure. He also had a broken arm which went untreated - Lt. Beck (P-38 pilot) died of pneumonia caused by exposure.

HAVE YOU PREVIOUSLY BEEN QUESTIONED BY ANY MILITARY OR NAVAL AUTHORITIES ABOUT ATROCITIES OR MISTREATMENT? No IF YES by WHO?, WHERE, WHEN  
Yes or no

DID YOU MAKE A SIGNED STATEMENT? No  
Yes or no

*Charles P. Hennings*  
Sign your name here.

CONFIDENTIAL

JOSEPH PEDERSEN

Name . . . . .

Cadet Class *4314* ; Adv. Trng. Location *Albany, GA*

Combat missions *17* ; Date leaving 306th: *June 17, 1944*

Did you fly in the Casey Jones Project? *NO*

What was your rank on leaving the 306th? *2nd Lt*

Do you know the whereabouts of any of your crew members who are not listed in the current Association directory? Or, do you know where they came from or where they may have gone to college, either before or after service?

If you can provide any such information, the Secretary will endeavor to make contact with them.

In our record updating, please list your nine digit  
Zip Code Home Phone *(503) 238-1752*