

Interview with John A. Bairnsfather, group intelligence officer.
11 Aug 1975, Mitchell Farm, Loveland, Ohio

Joined group at Wendover. Stayed with it three years.

Succeeded John A. Wright, a GM executive as group intelligence officer.

Putnam--On flight to England, forced down on ice cap in Greenland.
Knew that to be rescued he must stay with plane. Had terrible time
keeping prominent newsman from wandering off to search for help.
Later report told how newsman was hero of event.

When group lost 10 planes in one day, while Putnam was c.o., Putnam
ignored losses, pulled crews together and critiqued them on the
raid and forced them to think for themselves and to think ahead.

Putnam was very smart, one of finest pilots, excellent leader.

Planes at Wendover were in terrible condition.

Col. Overacker became furious over Raper's refusal to stay with aircraft
that were inadequate. (Raper's abortion record continued overseas, says
R. C. Williams, but when he took squadron command suddenly vanished).

Bairnsfather openly sided with Raper, and when group left Wendover for
Westover, Mass., Bairnsfather was put on Raper's plane. They couldn't
climb out of mountains, but finely through superb flying did find way
through the peaks, and headed east. Didn't really know how to get there,
but Bairnsfather told them to follow the railroad, which they did. Crew-
mans said that once they got to the Mississippi, he knew how to get to
Chanute Field. They came in very easily, hit the field, and then found
that they were the first to arrive by a long time. Col. O. was not happy
when he found Raper had already landed.

Raper led the ^{first} ~~second~~ Schweinfurt raid. Bombardier misses target on first
pass, so lead did a 360 and hit it second time around.

Lt. Patterson had own crew, but was forced to land plane in Idaho during
Wendover trng. Maj. Holt went up to small field, lined up sheriff and
others to light end of runway, and took it off at night and flew back
to base. Col. Overacker was furious and demoted Patterson to co-pilot.
On a practice mission over England (with Ely?) crew lost oxygen and be-
gan rapid descent, with bomb bay doors open. Pilot was unable to pull out
of dive and all were killed. Patterson's miscue in Idaho probably cost
him his life at that time.

Interview with John Bairnsfather at Loveland, Ohio, 11 Jan 1976

Estimates of intelligence personnel:

Wright, able, corporate type.

Baldwin, quiet, soft spoken, wealthy (Cleveland)

Glass--older

Hogg--had PhD, offered much in research abilities.

Kavanagh and Glass handled awards and decorations

Pool, New York lawyer, U. S. squash champion

Leatherman (Memphis, Tenn.

Al Weld--best writer, now deceased

Others:

Henry "Tiger" Terry. a real fighting, man. real leader. older and had good influence on younger fliers.

Casey--a fighting man, but not a commander

Terry told group after Berlin raid, and when others had the shakes about future trips there, that he would lead 20 airplanes there anytime, bomb the target, and bring 20 home. And he did.

Early losses were hard on commanders, because they knew each other too well. Overacker torn up by it all, and protested daylight, low-level tactics.

At Wendover, when the time came to move out, everyone sold their cars at high prices.

300 Mission party was the biggest ever, lasting three days.

Kesling was the most carefully prepared of air commanders. He studied and restudied flak areas, beginning preparations for next mission immediately after returning.

Chalfant well liked by everyone.

Isaac, New York jew, with a real sense of humor. After ditching in North Sea, he used his strength and agility to make sure everyone was hanging on to life raft. Once he had rounded them all up, he tried to get in raft, and was told there was no room for him. Everyone rescued. He told story on himself after return.

On leaflet mission after twar, one bomb was dropped too low, bomb went off just outside plane, filling it with smoke and tumbling it. Recovered.

BAIRNSFATHER, John A.

Joined group at Wendover field in summer, 1942.

Appt. Asst. A-2 3/30/43

Group S-2 8/9/43

Major 9/20/43

VP, Leonard M. Sive and Associates, Cincinnati 513/421-3000

Mitchell Farm, 1132 Weber Road, Loveland, O. 45140 513/831-3450

9 January 1989

Dear Mrs. Bairnsfather:

I was greatly saddened to learn of John's death recently, as one of our Cincinnati members sent me copies of the stories appearing in newspapers there. I passed the information on to some who knew him well in England, and of course a story and picture will appear in the January issue of Echoes.

I will remember my two visits to your Loveland farm to visit with him, and him to be a valuable source of information about the 306th and some of the personalities of that period.

Upon receiving the information about John I changed the mailing label on your name and we will continue to send copies of Echoes as long as we can reflect

As you may not have known, I worked for John for about six weeks in 1944 as an assistant public information officer, until I decided that I rather complete my combat tour and return to the U. S.

During one of my visits with John, He showed me a number of the pictures which he had of people and events of the 306th. At that time I did not have the means of copying them, but would like to ask at this time if you would be willing to loan them to me so that I might have copies made for our files?

I currently have the largest collection of pictures extant of the 306th, and am continually trying to expand the collection.

I would be most grateful if I might have the opportunity of looking at all the pictures he had. They would be returned to you in the briefest possible time.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

nut Hills from his eighth-floor window. "He could see some of the row houses and was thinking it would be an interesting project to renovate some of those," Nancy

terminals along East Fifth Street on Government Square. He was the design architect on that project while working for Harry Hake & Partners.

Episcopal Church in Terrace Park. Memorials may be sent to the Human Immunology Foundation, No. 5 Hilltop Terrace, Red Bank, N.J. 07701.

A. Good F. Erie Ave. 1 Square, Tu 4-8 P.M. Wednesday, Church of Memorial Fund 45208.

John A. Bairnsfather

John A. Bairnsfather, 88, a longtime advertising executive and Loveland resident, died Dec. 23 at Bethesda North Hospital of kidney failure.

His association in advertising started in 1919 at the Thompson-Koch Co., Cincinnati. In 1928, he moved to Chicago with Kling-Gibson Co., and Erwin Wasey Co.

After 1960, he was very active with Associated Advertising, which merged with Leonard M. Sive Co. of Cincinnati. Mr. Bairnsfather worked at the company until this fall.

All through his life he had a love for books, his wife, Kathleen M. Bairnsfather, said.

"He spent many hours reading and questioning for knowledge," she said. "His memory for detail was exemplary. He could read a passage and years later return to the book and the page and find the quote."

Mr. Bairnsfather was a private in the Marine Corps during World War I, and later served in World War II as a group intelligence officer stationed in Thurliegh, Bedfordshire, England.

Just before World War II, Mr. Bairnsfather bought a farm in Loveland where he farmed and raised cattle and later thoroughbreds for 42 years.

His lifelong love of horses started with riding from the Old Armory on Victory Parkway when he lived in Clifton, said his daughter, Catherine B. Striley of Loveland.



John Bairnsfather

He played polo with the Cincinnati Polo Club and the Chicago Polo Club. Mr. Bairnsfather also was a member of several hunt clubs, including the Camargo Hunt Club in Cincinnati.

"The many stories that he told about hunting, polo and racing at family gatherings showed how much horses were really a major part of his life," his daughter said.

Besides his wife and daughter, Mr. Bairnsfather is survived by a son, Michael J. Bairnsfather of Loveland; and three grandchildren.

The family held private services. Memorials may be made to the John A. Bairnsfather Memorial Fund, care of River Downs, 6301 Kellogg Ave., Cincinnati 45230.

***DOWL**
Marlin E. Sr. beloved husband of Dowl (nee) dear father Carol Dowl two granddaughters of Betty Lawrence, L. Dowl, also Dowl. For friends at the Funeral Home Monday, Tuesday, 10 A

ELDER
Edwin C. (aka Merle Elder 1st), brother of Merian Henges Elder, December 2nd. Will be at Mt. W. 1st, Saturday at 12 Noon. T. Funeral Home family.

ENGLER
Howard F., Edna Elaine (old Englert, Page, John Englert, P. December services made at Scler's Church.

KMB
1132 Weber
Lorland
045140



Mr. Russell A Strong
5323 Chovel Place
Charlotte N.C. 28205

January 23rd

Dear Russell.

Thank you ever so much for your kindest and most sincere words of sympathy.

I would be delighted to have you prize John's war pictures. At the moment I am not sure where all of them are. If you are not in any immediate need, while I am reorganizing, I will put them aside for you.

Let me know when you are in this area and I can direct you to several photo-developers that copy old photos.

Looking forward to seeing and speaking with you again.

Sincerely
Kathleen M. Burns-Potter

29 January 1989

Dear Mrs. Bairnsfather:

There is no pressure of time to get John's WWII pictures to me. As you find them set them aside, and when you feel you have collected most of them, send them along to me and I will see to getting those copied which I do not already have, and then will return them to you as quickly as possible.

I had a nice note from Beekman Pool thanking me for informing him of John's death, and I am sure others were pleased that someone took the time to inform them. At the last reunion several of the squadron commanders, and other staff officers, inquired about him.

Sincerely yours,

2 July 1989

Dear Mrs. Bairnsfather:

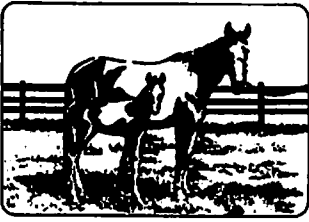
I am sorry that I did not honor your request earlier, but in a new location photography has been one of the more difficult areas to master.

But, finally there came an urgent request for some pictures to be used in a Belgian museum, and I found I had a good negative of the print of John. Thus, your request finally surfaced.

If you need any further prints, please let me know, as I do have a good negative.

It is a pleasure to be of help to you on this matter.

Sincerely yours,



MITCHELL
FARM

Vantaggio by Ribot
Diorix by Ambiorix
Ver E. Sharp by Vertex

John Bairnsfather

February 25, 1989

Dear Russell,

We want to thank you ever so much for such a nice article about John in the January 89 edition of the 306th Echo's.

We were most impressed with the handsome picture! Would there be any possibility of obtaining a copy?

John was an influence to every one that knew him; no matter how long or how short that time may have been. We have received such lovely notes from people who expressed their respect and the influence John had on them.

Our fond regards,

Kathy B. and

Catherine B. Stiles, daughter.