

F. Onnen Sr., 61, pilot, car dealer

Ferdinand H. Onnen Sr., a decorated pilot who participated in some of the heaviest bombing raids in Germany during World War II and later be-



FERDINAND ONNEN
Pilot during World War II

came the president of Towson Ford Sales, died Saturday at the Johns Hopkins Hospital.

A mass of Christian burial for Mr. Onnen will be held at 10 a.m. tomorrow at Immaculate Conception Church, Towson.

Mr. Onnen, 61, of Ruxton, was active until the last few weeks of his illness in the automobile business he founded as Onnen Motor Sales in 1946.

During World War II, Mr. Onnen was a flight commander who flew 25 missions with the Eighth Air Force, often in the "Lady Baltimore." He took part in the costly bombing raids against Kiel and the ball-bearing plants at Schweinfurt.

Flying the plane "Impatient Virgin" on the Kiel raid, Mr. Onnen later recalled that German fighters attacked his group and sent shells through his own plane, exploding an oxygen tank and missing him by inches.

Mr. Onnen said later that he was knocked unconscious, but finally came to and gained control of the damaged Flying Fortress, which had lost more than 1,000 feet of altitude.

He guided the plane back to England.

Later, during the Schweinfurt raid, which cost 60 planes, Mr. Onnen said

23 planes of his own command of 80 planes were lost.

"On the way back, navigation was unnecessary," he said after the war. "All the way we just followed the trail of smoke rising from burning ruins of American and German planes."

Decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross and an oak leaf cluster, Mr. Onnen also won the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters. He was flight commander of what was called the Clay Pigeon Squadron.

Back in the United States, Mr. Onnen became the director of operations at Romulus Army Air Base in Detroit and later the commanding officer of the Air Force Training Group at Phillips Field, Md.

He retired from active duty as a lieutenant colonel after the war and then went into the automobile business in Towson.

Mr. Onnen was an enthusiastic yachtsman, maintaining a 60-foot vessel near Gibson Island and sailing on vacations to Florida.

A graduate of Boys' Latin School, Mr. Onnen attended Loyola College but left in 1941, his senior year, to take flight training. He was commissioned in July 1942 and went to En-

gland to join the Eighth Air Force as a bomber pilot.

Mr. Onnen was the president of the Towson Association, later the Baltimore County Chamber of Commerce, for two terms in 1956 and 1957 and was president and director of the Automobile Trade Association of Maryland.

He also was a director of the Automobile Trade Association Group Insurance Trustees, a past director of the Towson National Bank and a member of the advisory board of the Mercantile-Safe Deposit & Trust Co.

Mr. Onnen was a past member of the Maryvale Advisory Board, chairman of the Baltimore County March of Dimes in 1953 and a member of the Baltimore Country Club. He was an officer of the Ford Dealers Advisory Fund and a member of the Ford Dealers Council.

Mr. Onnen is survived by his wife of 31 years, the former Patricia Pruett; a son, Ferdinand H. Onnen Jr. of Baltimore, and five daughters, Patricia Smith, Christine Diffenderfer, Lisa Marie Onnen, Gretchen Onnen and Joanna Onnen, all of Baltimore.

The family suggests that memorial contributions be made to the oncology department of Johns Hopkins Hospital.

CHRISTINE ONNEN DIFFENDERFFER
2201 POT SPRING ROAD
TIMONIUM, MARYLAND 21093

January 14, 1982

Mr. Wm. M. Collins, Jr.
2973 Heatherbrae Drive
Poland, Ohio 44514

Dear Mr. Collins,

I am writing to you to let you know my father, LTC Ferdinand H. Onnen, serial number O-791485 died on October 10, 1981 after a battle with Hodgkins disease, a form of cancer. I have enclosed his obituary. My father was a very fine, wonderful man and he is very greatly missed. He enjoyed "306th Echoes" very much, and often when it arrived we would read it together and he told me of his experiences, some of which related to those in your paper. If you mention my father in any of your articles, I would appreciate it if you would send me a copy of the newsletter containing same.

Very truly yours,
Christine Onnen Diffenderffer

18 August 1977

Mr. Ferdinand H. Onnen
1848 Circle Road
Ruxton, MD 21204

Dear Ferd:

Many thanks for your contribution to my research. I got it in the morning mail and have quickly copied those items in which I am particularly interested so that they can be returned to you.

Of especial interest was the receipt for one B-17. I had not seen one of those before, although I am sure there are others around.

If you have not done so, but have the materials, I hope you will delve into your 201 file for any orders I might need. These are really crucial, and are impossible to find except in personnel collections.

The next time I am up that way I hope we can meet and chat about the Clay Pigeons, et al.

Thanks again for your help.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong



DETAILS OF THE VEGESACK DAMAGE in the shipbuilding yards are noted under 1 as follows, (1a) 100 by 420 ft. building almost wrecked; (1b) small building damaged by blast; (1c) direct hits on shipbuilding shops; (1d) 50 by 150 ft. building two-thirds destroyed; (1e) building heavily damaged; (1f) corners of building blasted; (1g) direct hit on frame bending shop and blast damage to mould loft; (1h) lathe shop half destroyed; (1i) north half erecting shop heavily damaged; (1j) building severely damaged by blast; (1k) part of building destroyed; (1l) workshop two-thirds destroyed;

(1m) blast damage; (1n) buildings near engine smith's shop heavily damaged; (1o) gaps in roof of engine smith's shop; (1p) group of small buildings destroyed; (1q) building near smith burning; (1r) building south of carpenter shop blasted; (1s) small building at end of ways half destroyed; (1t) hits on slips 2 and 3; (1u) shed at end of slip 4 destroyed; (1v) power house burning and almost totally destroyed. Other damage includes craters indicated by 2, 3 and unnumbered arrows and a government building burning at 4. It will take an estimated several months to get the yards working again.

SCHWEINFURT—Crippling Blow Dealt Despite Losses

That the Schweinfurt mission of 14 October was a success, in spite of heavy losses, is revealed by these pictures. Our B-17s attacked ball bearing factories with 510 tons of HE and incendiary bombs from 21,500 to 24,500 feet. All five plants—representing about 65 percent of the ball and roller bearing capacity of Germany—were so heavily damaged that our bombers may never have to go back. It is estimated that before 14 October, Germany produced 250,000 ball bearings a day with approximately 30,000 allocated to aircraft. Daily production of the Schweinfurt plants was about 160,000 for planes, tanks, trucks, guns and other war machines.

Against 295 attacking B-17s, the enemy struck with a force

of over 400 fighters in a perfectly coordinated and timed and skillfully executed operation. Single engine fighters came in from the front firing machine guns and 20 mm. cannon. Waves of twin-engine fighters followed and fired a volley of rockets from long range (see page 7). The single engine fighters, refueled, attacked from all directions, and the twin-engined rocket carriers again followed the fighters closely and attacked from the front and rear. One AAF combat wing bore the brunt of this assault. Fifty-nine B-17s were shot down, one crashed at sea and six crashed on their return. Two P-47s, of the 159 that escorted bombers part of the way, were lost. Enemy losses were 186 destroyed, 27 probably destroyed and 89 damaged.



AFTER: Destruction in five bearing factories includes: (A) Kugelfischer foundry and gas plant, (B) almost every Fichtel and Sachs building, including machine, stamping and pressing shops, power station, (C) V.K.F. II machine shops, (D)

Kugelhalter machine shops and store houses, (E) V.K.F. I buildings including power station. Other severe damage includes: (F) large factory, (G) roundhouses and rail yards, (H) factory (destroyed), (I) labor camp, (J) factories.

Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum: Aug 17th '43

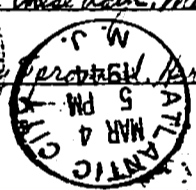
Dear Ferd: Got your letter a few days ago - first I've received in '43; really appreciate it. Mac, Casey, I & a lot of our predecessors are here - all well, but not too happy. Check up on Betty, Stella & Tom's bunch had these, I may be wrong, but don't think we're getting a square deal. Poor looking for you, but I hope you're okay! Thanks for everything. Say 'Hello' to all the boys for us, and hint a few for old times sake. See you again when this is over - write again if you're able. Good luck to all of you - Happy Landings, Ed

Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum: August 18, 1943

Dear Ferd: We were mighty glad to hear you are going strong. Thanks for writing Lucille & taking care of my stuff. Sorry I was shot down before we could make a trip together. Glad the boys are all OK & will room together shortly. He isn't quite as dreary here - naturally. We aren't kidding about Betty & friends - let those gals alone. Hope

we have us back on the old deck these days. Wait for us in England. Give us love from the old party people. Good luck, yours, Bill No.



1045

Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum: August 17th '44

Dear Ferd: Have been kept informed from home on your activities. Keep the old curve ball breakin', Chappie! Tho' things have changed much for both of us since last I saw you I don't think either of us has changed too much inside. Remember 'C'est la Guerre'? 'nuff said. Didn't have your address - hence the delay in writing. Will explain a lot to you when we get together - probably in old N.Y. Thanks much for contacting my folks. As a favor - please send them copies of our photo. Casey, Benson, Gouch, Papp, Mosos & a lot of old house members are here. Good luck - See you soon, I hope. Write soon - Ed

25-Mission Of Battle



CAPT. F. H. ONNEN

Capt. Ferdinand Henry Onnen and Capt. Edward J. Reynolds, Baltimore flyers who have completed 25 combat missions over Germany, are home on furlough with stories of narrow escapes in the skies over Europe.

Captain Onnen said that Baltimore's characteristic tranquillity was "like a tonic" after what he went through in England, and both were very glad to be home.

Captain Onnen, 25-year-old pilot and flight commander of the Clay Pigeon bomber squadron, said the Germans were "damn good flyers with damn good planes. What makes you so confounded mad is the way they gang up on a crippled plane. If one of our boys goes into a spin, 10 or 12 of them concentrate their fire on him and you see the bullets chipping off pieces of the fuselage and ripping it to ribbons. The boys inside can't get out, and with the plane out of control they're helpless. It's dirty flying.

Home On One Engine

"At St. Nazaire, in my Fort, The Lady Baltimore, we were struck by flak at the end of the bomb run and the port engines were knocked out. The oil caught fire and we started to leave a smoke trail. Enemy fighters ganged up on us and one of their 20-mm. shells knocked out a third engine, but not before we got three of them. Then they let us alone. You can't fly on one engine, but I had altitude and was close to the Channel. With the power I had, I did what I could to sustain our glide while the crew stood by to bail out. Somehow, we made it to an English field near the coast.

"We got back to our base later that night and found chalked up on the tally board the words 'Onnen—missing.'"

During a raid on Kiel when he was piloting the Fortress Impatient Virgin, 50 or 60 German fighters concentrated on Captain Onnen's squadron. A stream of machine-gun bullets missed him only by inches, struck an oxygen tank near him, and the resulting explosion knocked him cold. Before he came to, the plane had fallen 1,000 feet. But he regained control and his gunners got a Messerschmidt on that raid.

The Schweinfurt Raid

He was on the Schweinfurt II-bearing plant raid in which 60 American bombers were lost. In his wing, 23 of the 80 planes didn't get back. "On the way back," he said, "navigation was unnecessary. All the way we just followed the trail of smoke rising from burning ruins of American and German planes."

Captain Onnen said the gunners of the planes he piloted had shot down seven enemy planes and damaged four while he was at the controls.

Onnen has the Distinguished Fly-

ing Cross with one oak leaf cluster and the Air Medal with three oak leaf clusters. A cluster is appended to a decoration in lieu of awarding a decoration twice.

Left College For Air Corps

Captain Onnen lives with his grandmother, Mrs. H. C. Spetzler, 2924 North Calvert st. He is a graduate of the Boys' Latin School and left Loyola College during his senior year to join the Air Corps.

Over a year ago he started active service on submarine air patrol in the Caribbean area. From there he went to the African Gold Coast by way of Brazil. After a short stay there he was sent to Casablanca.

Baltimorean Takes Part In Raid On Reich

Special to The News-Post.

LONDON, Dec. 1. — American heavy bombers of the Eighth Air Force brought the record Allied offensive against Europe into a new month today by attacking Western Germany for the third day.

The bombers struck again in the wake of British Mosquito raiders. American medium bombers also joined in the two-way attack, escorted by British Spitfires.

CAPT. ONNEN IN RAID

The pilot of one of the Fortresses was Capt. Ferdinand H. Onnen, Baltimore athlete, who left Loyola College there two years ago to enlist in the Army, was assigned to aviation and came here last January. In telling of the raids he said:

"They weren't the easiest trips in the world. But despite the persistent interceptor attacks and heavy flak we saw the bomb loads sail down into the target areas before we turned back."

Captain Onnen is the son of Dr. and Mrs. Dietrich F. Onnen, Jr., of the Buckingham Arms Apartments.

FIGHTER SUPPORT

Lieut. Gen. Ira C. Eaker's fighter planes teamed with those of the R. A. F. to support the four-motored bombers in the attack on German targets not identified immediately.

Watchers on the English southeast coast said a big formation of the Eighth United States Air Force heavyweights swept out across the English Channel to inaugurate the December air offensive. Later, part of the formation flew over London on the return journey.

Only yesterday, Flying Fortresses raided the Rhineland steel center of Solingen, east of Dusseldorf, while Monday they bombed Bremen.



BOMBER PILOT — On one of the Flying Fortresses which today attacked Western Germany for the third straight day was Capt. Ferdinand H. Onnen, twenty-four (above), Baltimore athlete and senior at Loyola College when he enlisted. He tells of seeing bombs hit target areas.

FORTS BOMB U-BOAT YARDS

A GREAT German shipyard at Vegesack, near Bremen, where U-boats are built and repaired, was heavily bombed by four-engined U.S. bombers in daylight yesterday.

The attack was made by a strong force of Flying Fortresses and Liberators, United States headquarters announced last night.

Many German fighters were destroyed. Two American bombers are missing.

The RAF using Venturas, its speedy light bombers, attacked targets at Maashuis, near Rotterdam, in the afternoon.

Squadrons of Spitfires guarding bombers shot down two enemy fighters.

All the RAF planes returned from the raid.

Here is the story of the Flying Fortress raid as America will read it to-day, told by Homer Bigart, "Daily Herald" and "New York Herald-Tribune" Correspondent.

SOMETIME to-morrow, after his next of kin have been notified, America will know the name of the bombardier who died in the raid on Vegesack, a place which practically no American has ever heard of.

This bombardier, mortally wounded by flak, dragged his crushed body across the nose of a Flying Fortress, gave a last caress to the Norden bombsight, and plunged home a lever that sent high explosives screaming down on the U-boat repair slips along the River Elbe.

Waded Through Flak

There were many heroes in the raid on Vegesack, ten miles down the river from Bremen.

To raid this secure nest of submarine slips and repair shops, American Fortresses and Liberators had to wade through flak so thick and accurate that many planes came home with marks of battle.

There were four Luftwaffe types in the air—twin-engine Ju-88s that rode a parallel course for cripples, and the us-

OVER U-BOAT YARD

(Continued from Page One)

happening to the Fortress "Sky Wolf," in the formation just ahead.

An accurate flak-burst knocked out one engine, flying parts of which put the adjoining engine out of commission.

A gust of wind ripped open the door in the ball turret, and the gunner fell headlong outside the plane, clinging to the ship with both his legs and right arm.

The ship was under incessant attack, lurching as a dozen shells ripped the wings and fuselage.

Somehow the gunner, Staff-Sergeant Albert Carroll, of Marshall, Texas, scrambled back into the turret, and just in time to turn his gun on an approaching F.W.

"I thought my number was up," said Carroll.

"I couldn't get the door closed, my hand was freezing, the oxygen was giving out, and the interphone was off."

"Finally the guns froze. There was no use staying in the turret, so I crawled up into the waist."

Up front, First-Lieutenant Carl H. Morales, 24-year-old pilot, of Leavenworth, Kansas, was trying to keep the ship on a steady course with her two left wing engines gone.

Fooled The Nazis

He couldn't feather the props, because then the Junkers would spot him as a cripple and finish him off.

So the left wing propellers kept turning, tearing the vitals out of the busted engines, but apparently fooling the Nazis.

Sky Wolf was just about out of gas when Lieut. Morales brought her down to a marvellous landing late in the afternoon.

There was a bullet hole in the pilot's cockpit that would have accounted for Second-Lieut. Calvin Andrews Swaffer, of Memphis, Tenn., had he not happened to stoop at the moment to check his instruments.

The strength of the enemy fighters was variously estimated at 50 to 75.

First-Lieut. John W. Farrar, pilot of the Fortress Yard, Bird, counted 30 to 40 attacks directed at his squadron.

The Yard Bird had several holes and a damaged engine, and the navigator, First Lieut. Victor H. Ouman, was upset by a flak burst directly under his seat.

USAAF Hits Aero Works In Antwerp

Four Bombers Shot Down In Heaviest Fighter Opposition

Flying Fortresses and Liberators struck at German armament works in Antwerp, Belgium, in daylight yesterday, carrying the newest Allied non-stop air offensive into its 72nd hour.

Four bombers and one of the supporting Allied fighters were lost in what some veteran American airmen said was the most severe opposition yet encountered on U.S. raids from bases in Britain.

It was the second U.S. raid in two days. Sunday, Nazi factories near Paris were hit.

The attack, which was aimed at the big Eria Aero Engine works on the edge of Antwerp, followed by only a few hours a crushing RAF night raid on Kiel, in northern Germany.

The Air Ministry announced that Bomber Command attacked Kiel "in great strength," a seldom-used phrase which observers said probably indicated the largest RAF force in some weeks. Twelve RAF bombers were lost in the attack on the Nazi naval base there.

Clear Weather For Run

The American striking groups yesterday, described as "a large force" by Eighth Air Force Headquarters, made their bombing run in clear weather but against heavy fighter opposition.

Pending a check by intelligence officers, only two enemy planes were claimed as destroyed in the running fight between the Luftwaffe and the supporting Allied fighters.

Bombing results were described as "good," in an official communique.

Flak over the target was moderate, but accurate, combat crews reported, but the Americans' real trouble came from Nazi fighters who swarmed to the attack as the bombers approached the European coast, followed them to the target and trailed them most of the way back home.

Most of the fighters seemed to be FW190s and Me109s, with their leaders apparently dictating new tactics to combat the firepower of the Forts and Libs; air crews said the Nazis seemed to be concentrating on one group of bombers at a time.

Bombing Bombers

This new attack device followed reports from American airmen who struck at the Renault works in Paris the day before to the effect that German fighter planes were again dropping bombs on the bombers.

Confirmation for the story of bombing the bombers came from Lt. Col. Claude E. Putnam, of Jacksboro, Tex., 27-year-old group commander, who led one combat wing of the attack on the Renault works in daylight Sunday.

"The bombs they dropped were accurate for height but they missed us by almost four miles," said Col. Putnam. "It took us about a minute to get to the spot where the bombs burst. Smoke left by the bombs from the German planes covered an area the size of one of our hangars."

"We take it as a damn good indication they are afraid to come in and

Alumni in Africa include 2nd Lieut. Aus McGlannan, ex '42; 2nd Lieut. Ferdinand H. Onnen, ex '43, and 1st Lieut. William L. Sanford. Lieut. Onnen has named his plane "Lady Baltimore."

Intensive Attacks, Crews Act Like Taciturn Veterans

By LEE McCARDELL

(Sunpapers Staff Correspondent)
A United States Bomber Station Somewhere in England, May 22 (By Cable)—After ten days of the most intensive aerial bombardment of Nazi territory from British bases since the United States entered the war, bomber crews of this station, including many Marylanders, are settling down like taciturn veterans to the grim business of blasting the daylights out of the enemy.

Because this is only one of many scattered fields from which heavy bombers have been taking off to dump ton after ton of explosives and incendiaries on Continental targets, you must read the official communique from the headquarters of the United States Bomber Command for a complete summary of the past ten days' operations.

Do Job Of Supermen

But it can be reported that the boys from this field who ride the bombers—and many of them still are boys, mostly in their early twenties—are doing the job of supermen with less sentiment, a better aim, more confidence and a colder determination than, understandably enough, marked earlier missions. Aerial photographs showing the havoc wrought by their bombs prove they are getting results.

They still go to battle gaily these May mornings when their Fortresses taxi around the field's perimeter track to the runway between lines of ground-crewmembers and other combat men not in on the day's show. They wave farewell to each other light-heartedly as thundering motors gather speed and lift the ships into the hazy sky, where the squadrons fall into formation and wheel away to war.

Split-Second Timing

Only a small part of the complete operations can be seen from any one field. Other squadrons take off from other fields on split-second timing which, to the layman's amazement, brings many formations to a distant rendezvous and over a target hundreds of miles away within a minute of the navigators' calculations.

The all-out bombing of the Nazis has not yet nearly reached full force. It is just beginning. New bombers and fresh crews are pouring into Great Britain. Old fields are often crowded with new ships. New fields are being constructed while untried combat crews are being groomed in practice flight for actual operations.

Old Crews Broken Up

Old crews long accustomed to flying together frequently are broken up now to include new blood. Pilots rarely fly one ship continually. If the Fortress to which a pilot is regularly assigned is shot up, he usually takes another ship on the next mission. There is no shortage of new ships hampering almost continuous operations.

Among the older favorites is Lieut. Kenny Reecher's Fortress, "Maryland, My Maryland," now eligible for a half dozen hash marks in recognition of as many missions. But Kenny isn't flying her for the time being. He's sick in

CITY'S LOVE SENT TO FOE

Maryland, My Maryland Drops Bomb With Greeting On Lorient

Lieut. Kenneth A. Reecher, Of Hagerstown, Pilots Bomber

By LEE McCARDELL
(Continued from Page 1)

Sergt. Jake Kirn, making his twentieth mission.

All the Marylanders returned safely. But this station is not a happy place tonight, for several of the bombers are missing.

Reecher's ship, which suffered a dozen hits from 20-mm. German shells and which was the only Fort in its particular squadron, returned to the field late tonight.

Some Take A Beating

"Flak and fighter opposition were the worst I have ever seen," said Lambert when his group got home. "My ship came through without damage and was too busy flying in formation to see what happened to the others, but I know that several took a beating.

"German fighters, flying in formation, were waiting for us when we got over Germany. They flew alongside us until we got over the target, then gained altitude, and came after us. But we made a good bomb run just the same."

The squadron with which Reecher's Fort flew was below the group leader, on the right. It got off all its bombs, but two 20 millimeter shells put the Number Two engine of Reecher's plane out of commission. Two more struck the nose. Two more hit the bomb bay. The wings and belly suffered other hits one carrying away the rear landing wheel.

Is Knocked Dizzy

One shell, hitting the tail, exploded in the tail gunner's compartment, the shrapnel riddling the leather flying jacket of the tail gunner, Sergt. W. W. F. Brittain, of Houston, Texas. But Brittain miraculously escaped injury.

"The explosion knocked me dizzy for a moment," he said. "I didn't know what had happened. It was a Focke Wulf, and our right waist gunner got it a minute later. I hit another and saw it go down."

The right waist gunner was Sergt. L. J. Durfee, of Flint, Mich. He, too, had his troubles, part of the waist window being carried away under his nose.

Lands Without Accident

"One instant it was there, and the next it was gone," Durfee said. "Don't know whether it was flak or 20 millimeter. It just disappeared all of a sudden."

Another Focke Wulf was shot down by Sgt. Edward J. Zabawa, of Garfield Heights, Ohio, the bombardier on Reecher's ship.

But Fightin' Pappy came home, Reecher landing her without accident in a stiff cross-wind with one motor idle and the rear landing wheel missing. Both pilot and crew were pretty badly shaken.

On Flying Fortress

Somewhere on overseas service is a Flying Fortress which bears the name of "Lady Baltimore." Its skipper is a Baltimorean, First Lieutenant Ferdinand Henry Onnen, whose home is at 2924 North Calvert street.



Lieutenant Onnen left Loyola College during his sophomore year in December, 1941, to enlist in the United States Army Air Forces and he received his wings and commission in July, 1942. He was promoted to first lieutenant in December, 1942.

Terms It "Rugged Show"

"We owe a lot to Lieutenant Reecher," Durfee said. "If it hadn't been for him we might not have come back at all."

"I never saw German fighters so close," said Reecher. "One attacking us head on peeled off so near I was sure he had hit our right wing. I saw one of the Forts go down in flames. It was rather a rugged show."

The Fort on which Onnen flew as copilot developed engine trouble shortly after crossing the German coast. The pilot, Lieut. Bill McKearn, of Beloit, Mich., decided to turn back. The ship reached the home station a couple of hours before the others, and landed without mishap.

Sticks To His Radio

Kirn, flying in a Fortress named Miss Swoose II stuck to his radio throughout the raid.

"Had a couple of bullets go through the stabilizer," Kirn said. "It was a bit rough while it lasted."

Two other Marylanders at this station did not participate in today's raid. They are Lieut. Charles T. Schoolfield, of Mount Washington, pilot, and Sergt. Ray T. Smith, of Easton, an aerial gunner.

Smith had been on fifteen raids. Schoolfield made his first yesterday to Lorient.

Wants A Lady Baltimore II

Lieutenant Onnen had his eyes on the Maryland, My Maryland while the ship was in the hangar here, before it was assigned to Lieutenant Reecher. Onnen had hoped to name her Lady Baltimore II, to replace another Fortress, Lady Baltimore I, which he flew overseas from the States to England via North Africa several months ago.

In the shifting of crews and re-assignment of ships, Onnen lost the first Lady Baltimore to another pilot. As soon as he gets another ship of his own, she'll become Lady Baltimore II, Onnen says.

Must Get Another Crew

But Onnen also will have to find another crew. Most of the members of his original crew have been scattered among other ships and many are reported missing.

Losses in his squadron have been the heaviest of any similar unit in the European theater of operations, and the results of today's raid, while it was a highly successful operation, left the entire station saddened and subdued tonight.

Marylanders In Britain Settle Down To Task Of Bombing Axis

After Ten Days Of Most Intensive Attacks, Crews Act Like Taciturn Veterans

By LEE McCARDELL
(Sunpapers Staff Correspondent)
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 "Flak and fighter opposition were the worst I have ever seen," said Lambert when his group got home. "My ship came through without damage and was too busy flying in formation to see what happened to the others, but I know that several took a beating.

"German fighters, flying in formation, were waiting for us when we got over Germany. They flew alongside us until we got over the target, then gained altitude and came after us. But we made a good bomb run just the same."

The squadron with which Reecher's Fort flew was below the group leader, on the right. It got off all its bombs, but two 20 millimeter shells put the Number Two engine of Reecher's plane out of commission. Two more struck the nose. Two more hit the bomb bay. The wings and belly suffered other hits one carrying away the rear landing wheel.

Is Knocked Dizzy
 One shell, hitting the tail, exploded in the tail gunner's compartment, the shrapnel riddling the leather flying jacket of the tail gunner, Sergt. W. W. F. Brittain, of Houston, Texas. But Brittain miraculously escaped injury.

"The explosion knocked me dizzy for a moment," he said. "I didn't know what had happened. It was a Focke Wulf, and our right waist gunner got it a minute later. I hit another and saw it go down."

The right waist gunner was Sergt. L. J. Durfee, of Flint, Mich. He, too, had his troubles, part of the waist window being carried away under his nose.

Lands Without Accident
 "One instant it was there, and the next it was gone," Durfee said. "Don't know whether it was flak or 20 millimeter. It just disappeared all of a sudden."

Another Focke Wulf was shot down by Sgt. Edward J. Zabawa, of Garfield Heights, Ohio, the bombardier on Reecher's ship.

But Fightin' Pappy came home, Reecher landing her without accident in a stiff cross-wind with one motor idle and the rear landing wheel missing. Both pilot and crew were pretty badly shaken.

On Flying Fortress Somewhere on overseas service is a Flying Fortress which bears the name of "Lady Baltimore."



Its skipper is a Baltimorean, First Lieutenant Ferdinand Henry Onnen, whose home is at 2924 North Calvert street.

Lieutenant Onnen left Loyola College during his sophomore year in December, 1941, to enlist in the United States Army Air Forces and he received his wings and commission in July, 1942. He was promoted to first lieutenant in December, 1942.

Terms It "Rugged Show"

"We owe a lot to Lieutenant Reecher," Durfee said. "If it hadn't been for him we might not have come back at all."

"I never saw German fighters so close," said Reecher. "One attacking us head on peeled off so near I was sure he had hit our right wing. I saw one of the Forts go down in flames. It was rather a rugged show."

The Fort on which Onnen flew as copilot developed engine trouble shortly after crossing the German coast. The pilot, Lieut. Bill McKearn, of Beloit, Mich., decided to turn back. The ship reached the home station a couple of hours before the others, and landed without mishap.

Sticks To His Radio

Kirn, flying in a Fortress named Miss Swoose II stuck to his radio throughout the raid.

"Had a couple of bullets go through the stabilizer," Kirn said. It was a bit rough while it lasted."

Two other Marylanders at this station did not participate in today's raid. They are Lieut. Charles T. Schoolfield, of Mount Washington, pilot, and Sergt. Ray I. Smith, of Easton, aerial gunner.

Smith had been on fifteen raids. Schoolfield made his first yesterday to Lorient.

Wants A Lady Baltimore II

Lieutenant Onnen had his eyes on the Maryland, My Maryland while the ship was in the hangar here, before it was assigned to Lieutenant Reecher. Onnen had hoped to name her Lady Baltimore II, to replace another Fortress, Lady Baltimore I, which he flew overseas from the States to England via North Africa several months ago.

In the shifting of crews and re-assignment of ships, Onnen lost the first Lady Baltimore to another pilot. As soon as he gets another ship of his own, she'll become Lady Baltimore II, Onnen says.

Must Get Another Crew

But Onnen also will have to find another crew. Most of the members of his original crew have been scattered among other ships and many are reported missing.

Losses in his squadron have been the heaviest of any similar unit in the European theater of operations, and the results of today's raid, while it was a highly successful



TOWSON FORD SALES, Inc.

TOWSON, MARYLAND 21204
(301)823-3131

909 York Road
925 York Road
926 York Road
950 York Road

Lt. William A. Moses (Bombardier with my cre w) shot down 3rd mission- o.k. in Stalag 13)
1705 Wayne ave
S.Pasadena,Calif.

Edw.S.Gregory (Crew Chief-367th)
859 Fremont ave
Salt Lake City,Utah

Kenneth Reecher (Squadron Commander-367th)
7 Magnolia ave
Hagerstown,Maryland

Tom Witt(Squadron Leader-367th)
Box 56
Cookville,Texas

Lt. Edw O'Brien (My co-pilot) shot down 3rd mission- o.k.in Stalag 13
1922 Ridge rd
Homewood, Ill.

Wodrow Wilson Thomas (Co-pilot 367) (current address)
Weems Creek
Annapolis,Maryland

8-16-77

Dear Russell:

Tomorrow is the anniversary of the first Schweinfurt raid-scarriest day of my life-60 planes lost!

These addresses are 30 years old from my ancient address book--Hope a letter to them can be properly forwarded. I've included cards from Moses and O'Brien from Stalag Luft. I know that they arrived home o.k.

Please forgive the preponderance of clippings about me,but my family had them waiting for me after I returned home. I would appreciate it if you would return them .

Best Regards


Ferd Onnen

dropped. But we hope those days are gone.

In addition to addresses, we have pumped some other data into the

It would help greatly if you would fill out the enclosed form and return it to Russell A. Strong -- Rt. 1, Turnpike Rd -Laurinburg, NC 28352.

Name Ferd H. Onnen, Sr.

Street Address 926 York rd

City, State, Zip Towson, Maryland 21204

Squadron 367th Serial No. 0-791485 Job (MOS) 2180

Date of Arrival Dec '42 Date of Departure Jan '44 (?)

Special Assignments Sq. Ldr

Present Title (Gen., Col., Sgt., Dr., Atty., etc.) Lt. Col-Res

Decorations (from 306th only) DFC with cl. Air Med 3 cl

Eu.theater- ~~PAC THEATER~~

SEND PAYMENTS & COMPLETED REGIST

is a good idea to make him your airplane Armament Officer.
top turret gunner is no longer someone who transfers gas for you
1304 / HA
111

Automatic landing in fog was brought to
have been more than welcomed on the base in '42-43
Another "First" was the "Flying Bedstead" - the experimental take-off aircraft from which the "Harrier" VTOL was developed. Members of the 368th Squadron might like to know it was from one of their old revetments that these experiments were carried out. Another "First" in which Thurleigh is proud to have had a hand is "Concorde", much of the early experimental flying for that aircraft being carried out from here.

Before ending this article however, I must tell you of one thing left behind by the 306th BG which has remained in as good a condition as it was in those distant days when B-17s roared over the countryside . . . that is the goodwill, the fond memories and the great respect that is held for members of the Group by the people who live in Thurleigh and the surrounding villages. Even if every part of the base crumbled to dust, those memories would remain warm and clear in the hearts of all who knew "Them Yanks"!

— Keith Paull.

Information Questionnaire

We are now on a computer with our computer for future research use. addresses. This should help greatly in Unfortunately, we do not have all of keeping the list straight and in order. the data for everyone. The coupon Whenever we have tried to add to the below what we have put in, when available

7 August 1977

Mr. Ferdinand Onnen
Towson Ford Sales, Inc.
909 York Road
Towson, MD 21204

Dear Ferd:

Bill Collins passed your letter along.

I'd be very interested in seeing the clippings which you have, and to have an opportunity to copy them and return them to you. Also would like to see any 306th pictures you might have.

How about your crew members? Do you know where each of them came from? We have a search list which is worked on constantly in trying to find people, and we'd like these names in it, if possible.

We are also trying to match plane names and numbers. Do you know the number of Lady Baltimore?

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong

7 August 1977

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1059

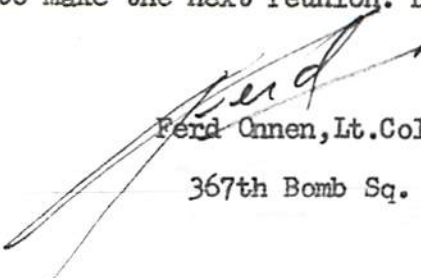
7-28-77

Dear Bill:

Hope the attached helps and thanks for the "306th Echoes" .

I have a great number of clippings concerning Maryland men in the 306th- most of us graduated in class '42 E or '42 F and arrived in England in December or January. All of my crew members were from the midwest and we flew the "Lady Baltimore" until she was shot down(another pilot flying) ;they spent the rest of the war in Stalag 13.

Sorry I can't make the England trip, but hope to make the next reunion. Do you remember Col Raper(changed to Rader) ?


Ferd Onnen, Lt.Col.USAF

367th Bomb Sq.

7 February 1982

Mrs. Christine Diffenderffer
2201 Pot Spring Road
Timonium, MD 21093

Dear Mrs. Diffenderffer:

I was sorry to learn through Mr. Collins of the death of your father, Ferdinand Onnen.

I had never had an opportunity to meet him. We flew in the same squadron, but his combat tour ended before mine began.

We will be pleased to carry a note in the April issue of 306th Echoes, and to furnish you with a copy of that issue.

I am particularly interested in knowing if among your father's effects you may have found any of his Army records, notably a 201 file, which is the officer's personal record, or his Form 5, which contains his flying record.

If you have them, I would be very much interested in seeing them, as I am trying to piece together a great many things about the organization. Some of these records were never kept by the Air Force, and I am only able to complete the group record by finding individuals who had Special Orders in their own files. I would appreciate it very much if you could send them to me. I will return them the following day, and will be happy to pay for your postage and the cost of registering or insuring them.

Additionally, a new history of the 306th Bomb Group will be out in about a month. Your father's name does appear in it, and if you are interested in purchasing a copy, I enclose an order form.

Sincerely yours,

Russell A. Strong