

radio equipment and signal flares were carried in one ship. Medical supplies, with Capt. Edgar O. Hughes, Washington, Ill., a flight surgeon, went in the other. Capt. Hughes returned to Italy with the plane.

Members of a special force commanded by an Army Air Forces colonel with years of experience in pioneering civilian air lines, went along to set up communications and establish liaison in Rumania. With the force went a supply of Red Cross packages.

MEET ESCORT

Shortly after they crossed the Yugoslav coast, the two bombers picked up their Mustang escort and flew on to Bucharest at 12,000 feet. The course was plotted to avoid any known flak positions, and no antiaircraft fire was observed.

Arriving over Bucharest, the formation dropped to 2,000 feet and then circled for a landing. The escort aircraft covered the field, some planes flying as low as 50 feet to make sure that no emergency developed on the ground.

The fighters buzzed the field first to receive flare signals, and assure themselves that the way was clear. The Mustangs remained in the area indulging in acrobatics and watch-

Good News Awaits Air Evacuee From Rumania

(By A Staff Correspondent)

A 15TH AAF BASE IN ITALY, Sept. 3—Lt. Col. William P. Litton, Shaw, Miss., one of the 1,000 AAF combat crewmen evacuated by air from a Rumanian camp last week had a surprise in store for him when he stepped out of the Flying Fortress that flew him back to this southern Italy 15th AAF base.

Former commander of a Lightning fighter group, Col. Litton was informed upon arrival that he had been promoted to a full colonel, making his return doubly welcome.

The colonel led the daring low-level fighter-bomber attack on the Romano-Americano oil refinery at Ploesti, June 10. His plane went down over Rumania several weeks ago.

Outside the fence were a lot more, mostly peasants, who had come up in carts."

"The field had a lot of German planes on it," said 1st Lt. William H. Lorenz, Bayside, L. I., who was Maj. Schroeder's co-pilot. "Most of them were ME-109s, belonging to the Rumanian Air Force. The field wasn't bad, except that it fell away at one end."

Maj. Schroeder described the reception given the 15th AAF crews. "They wanted us to stay around for awhile, but we only could stay about 20 minutes. We weren't able to do without our escort."

After remaining on the ground for 20 minutes, the Flying Fortresses took off and returned to Italy minus the cargo of supplies and equipment. In the meantime, communications with 15th AAF headquarters were established, and plans for the mass evacuation perfected.

Allied Airmen Composed Own Song Of Prison Camp

(By A Staff Correspondent)

BUCHAREST, Sept. 3—Like "Mademoiselle from Armentieres," or any other soldier song, the words of "Bucharest Cannonball," the official song of the Allied airmen's prisoner of war camp here cannot be traced to any one man.

You can't find agreement even on who started the thing, which, like Topsy, just grew into a multi-versed, almost endless, thing. And for some of the verses you'll have to get personal audience with any of the 1,000-odd men who remember them—they can't go into a family newspaper.

The tune was a straight steal from "The Wabash Cannonball," but from there on all similarity ends. To give you an idea:

Across the Adriatic, through spacious skies of blue,
There came a thousand bombers, with airmen tried and true,
They headed through the Balkans, and straight for Bucharest,
But when they reached Flak Alley, the gunners did the rest.

(By a Staff Correspondent)

A 15TH AAF BASE IN ITALY, Sept. 3—The air evacuation last week of more than 1,000 AAF combat crewmen held prisoner in Rumania was conceived and directed by Lt. Col. James A. Gunn, III, Kelseyville, Calif., a group commander shot down over Ploesti in August, further details of the amazing rescue revealed today.

When the Liberator he was piloting was shot down, Col. Gunn was taken prisoner and subsequently became the commander of a school house in downtown Bucharest filled with airmen captured in the course of two years of bombing operations over the Balkans. After the Rumanian capitulation, and while the city still was under siege by the Germans, Col. Gunn conceived the plan for a mass evacuation.

"When I bailed out over Ru-

mania," Col. Gunn said in describing his capture, "there wasn't much I could do about getting away. Hundreds of people were watching me come down. I landed in a corn field and dodged around while search parties looked for me. Finally, I hid in a shock of wheat.

"The searchers got organized and went through the field poking each shock with a stick and firing into some of them. An NCO and two privates captured me. I was loose about an hour.

"I was taken into Ploesti. On the way, we went by the target we had just hit and it still was burning. In a headquarters I ran across members of my crew and other boys who had gone down that day. They put us in some temporary prison camps.

"I tried to walk out of the place, but they caught me.

TAKEN TO BUCHAREST

The following day, the colonel was taken to Bucharest, where there were two prison camps, one for enlisted men and another for officers. As ranking officer, Col. Gunn became commander, succeeding Maj. William H. Yaeger, Hebronville, Texas, who had gone down in the low-level Liberator attack on Ploesti August 1, 1943.

Maj. Yaeger had organized the camp well, despite inadequate blankets, food and other supplies. The mess was run by an American staff, and the food consisted mainly of black bread and stew.

"Red Cross packages were a precious item," Col. Gunn said. "The men asked me every five minutes when the packages would arrive. We couldn't have got along without them.

"Among the things that were organized were escapes. There was an escape committee with secret personnel that co-ordinated plans. I formed a crew and joined two other groups that were working in shifts to chisel through a two-and-a-half-foot stone wall into an adjacent building fronting on another street.

"On August 23, it was announced to us by a Rumanian captain that his country had joined the Allies.

"I started asking around for someone to see, and finally was

taken to the new government to see the minister of war. I asked to be allowed to fly to Italy.

"They were willing, and got up a pilot and a rather beat-up Savoia-Marchetti to fly me back. I briefed the pilot on the course, flak areas and such. Frankly, I wasn't too upset when engine trouble forced us back.

RUMANIAN ACE

"Capt. Cantacuzino, the top Rumanian fighter pilot, offered to fly me back in an ME-109. It wasn't a pleasant trip. We took the radio out of the fuselage, and I crawled into a hole which was covered by a plate and screwed back on. The plane was painted with American insignia and flags. I gave the captain a course, and we put down on my home field in Italy.

"We made the trip in about two hours, and when we landed on August 28, the captain told the men who met us in his excellent English that he had a surprise for them. He unscrewed the plate, and there were my feet sticking out.

Col. Gunn then went to 15th AAF headquarters and worked out plans for the mission with Brig. Gen. Charles F. Born, operations chief. A preliminary flight of two B-17s with medical equipment and personnel flew to an airdrome near Bucharest.

Pravda Says Nazi Spies Still At Work In Turkey

MOSCOW, Sept. 3—The Moscow newspaper, "Pravda," has questioned the position of Turkey in the war by publishing a dispatch from its Ankara, Turkey, correspondent charging that "German espionage activities in Turkey and the Near East have not diminished but have become more intense" and that "Turkish authorities are doing nothing to obstruct these activities."

"German diplomats have not left Turkey, the dispatch says. It names Embassy Counsellor Enke and Assistant Attache Meizisch, "who, as everyone in Ankara knows, is Gestapo representative in Turkey" as among the Nazi representatives remaining in the Turkish capital.