

TAYLOR

THAT OTHERS MAY LIVE

The Aerospace
Rescue and
Recovery Service

THAT
OTHERS
MAY
LIVE



DUTTON

by L. B. TAYLOR, JR.

4 □ A PROUD HISTORY

The history of rescue is as old as the brotherhood of man.

No matter what era, area, or circumstance is involved, rescue has always been one of the great human interest stories. Be it a man trapped in a cave, a survivor drifting aimlessly on a life raft in the ocean, or a lone pilot lost and injured in the enemy-thick jungles of Vietnam, there is no saga quite as inspiring, as exhilarating or as dramatic as that of man risking serious injury or death itself to help his fellow man in trouble. Rescue is a compelling, all-encompassing human instinct. In crises people pull together as never before, often performing deeds far beyond their normal capacities when a life is in the balance. So it has always been and will always be. Such is the nature of man.

The first known aerial rescue occurred in 1870, thirty-three years *before* the Wright Brothers flew their plane at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina. It happened in Paris during the Franco-Prussian War. To escape the bombardment of Bismarck's guns, the French used observation balloons to evacuate by airlift 160 wounded soldiers who otherwise would have died or been captured by on-charging troops. The same principle of moving injured men is being used by ARRS throughout Southeast Asia, although the tactics have been refined and the means of transportation revolutionized.

Almost before the Wright Brothers landed, following their historic, twelve-second flight, farsighted men were considering the rescue potentials of the airplane. U.S. Army personnel, as early as 1909, visualized the swift movement of their wounded from battlefield to hospital. But, again, it was the imaginative French who first put the theories into practice.

In 1915, during World War I, the French Air Service successfully evacuated patients from Serbia by air, although, in those perilous, early days of flight there was nearly as much chance of being injured en route as there was on the battlefield. Three years later Americans were stripping rear cockpit seats out of single-engine Jennys and modifying them to serve as "flying ambulances"; but before the concept of military aerial rescues could be proven, the war ended.

Little happened over the next quarter century to