
ARMY MEDICAL DEPARTMENT PROFILES

BRIG. GEN. FRANK ALLEN RAMSEY

Veterinary Corps

U.S. Army



Office of Medical History
Office of the Surgeon General
Alexandria, Virginia
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Foreword

In 1998, Lt. Gen. Ronald R. Blanck, Surgeon General of the Army, reestablished an official historical program under a new Office of Medical History. Oral history forms a central element in the new program, which will conduct regular interviews with key Office of the Surgeon General and Medical Command active and retired personnel, publish selected interviews in a "Medical Memoir" series, and provide coverage of current operations and issues with participants and decision makers.

The first interview to be published in the Medical Memoir series is one conducted by Col. Robert B. McLean, Medical Corps, with Lieut. Gen. Leonard D. Heaton under the Senior Officers Oral History Program at the Military History Institute, United States Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, in 1978. General Ramsey's Veterinary Corps Profiles oral history was conducted on 15 April 1999, at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, by Barry W. Fowle, Ph.D., Office of Medical History.

General Ramsey's oral history reflects a lifetime of successes in command and staff positions, and provides a valuable source of veterinarian history for the inquiring researcher, be he historian or veterinarian.

The Interviewer

Dr. Barry W. Fowle, formerly a historian with Headquarters, United States Army Corps of Engineers from 1983 to 1998, is now a senior contract historian with the Office of Medical History, Office of The Surgeon General of the United States Army. He received a B.A. from the University of the Philippines and an M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of Maryland. He is editor of *Builders and Fighters: United States Army Engineers in World War II*, and co-author of *The 51st Again: An Engineer Battalion in World War II*. Dr. Fowle retired in September, 1971, as a lieutenant colonel, Signal Corps, with 23 years of service in the United States Army.

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Frank Allen Ramsey

Frank Allen Ramsey was born in Rock Springs, Texas, on 1 May 1929. He became interested in veterinary work while working for the husband of one of his sisters before and during high school. He attended high school in Uvalde, Texas, and upon graduation in 1947, went to Texas Agricultural and Mechanical [TA&M] University, where he received his degree in veterinary medicine in 1954.

Upon graduation, Ramsey went to Fort Worth and worked for the United States Department of Agriculture in their Meat Inspection Division. Rather than be drafted into the Army, Ramsey volunteered to serve in the Army Veterinary Corps in 1955. He originally intended to only serve his two year requirement. However, Ramsey realized that economic conditions were not conducive to going into private practice; therefore, he decided to continue his service in the Army. He reported to the Medical Field Service School at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where he attended the three month Medical Department Officer Basic Course.

Ramsey then attended the United States Army Medical Department Veterinary School located in Chicago, Illinois. The meat packing houses in Chicago were essential training aids for the school. There, he learned how to grade meat according to quality and how to inspect the meat for sanitation. That school lasted two to three months.

Having completed that course, Ramsey received orders to La Rochelle, France to be commander of the 73d Medical Detachment Veterinary Service, a twelve man TO&E unit. He provided veterinary service for the northern and western sections of BASEC [Base Section] in the Communications Zone [COMZ]. His specific duties included inspection of all food provided for U.S. forces in Europe. While most non-perishables were delivered to La Rochelle from the U.S., perishable items, such as meat and eggs, were purchased in Europe. Ramsey encountered many problems finding facilities in post-war Europe that met U.S. sanitary requirements for providing perishable items.

In 1957, Ramsey received orders to become Berlin Command Veterinarian. During this assignment, the last horse-mounted unit in the Army,

stationed in Berlin, was disbanded. A number of horses were sent down to the U.S. Army in France. However, Ramsey was tasked with what to do should one of the remaining horses die. A study was conducted and it was concluded that the horses would be flown back to the United States for disposal.

In 1958, General Ramsey received orders to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. As Post Veterinarian, his job was similar to what it had been in Europe. Food inspection was the primary function. He inspected the various food establishments in the area (dairy products, meat, vegetables, eggs, and poultry), as well as incoming shipments of subsistence already procured for the Army. He also performed establishment sanitary inspections on all the food handling establishments on post. This included the dining facilities, the mess halls, the post bakery, the post meat cutting plant, the commissary, all of the post exchange activities, and the officer, NCO, and enlisted clubs. Ramsey also took care of approximately 50 horses, plus the working dogs assigned to Fort Leonard Wood.

Another assigned duty included that of acting Preventive Medicine Officer [PMO]. Normally a Medical Corps position, the Post Surgeon was short of medical doctors so he sent Ramsey to the four-month orientation course at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, to train him for this position. Preventive medicine involved the immunization program at the Engineer School, the Engineer Training Center, and at the Basic and Advanced Course. It included insect and rodent control, water testing, water wells, chlorination and fluoridation, the sewage disposal plant, the water purification plant, rabies control, and much more.

In 1962, Ramsey received orders to the United States Military Academy, West Point, New York, for assignment as the USMA Veterinarian. His first job was to obtain equipment and supplies for the veterinary clinic. This was made easier since, within a few days of his arrival, he successfully provided emergency services to the cat belonging to the president of the Officer's Wives Club. Ramsey also introduced four U.S. Army official U.S. government property mascot mules, which were housed at West Point, to the Academy football games. He obtained special West Point colored tack for the mules, and four to eight cadet mule riders were elected by the Cadet Corps to ride the mules and perform equestrian acrobatics during the games.

Ramsey also served as PMO at the Academy. While serving in this position, Ramsey was able to institute a number of reforms in how food was handled. He also instituted a new program to determine how much training should occur in hot weather. In its first year of operation, there were no heat exhaustion cases, compared with dozens the year before.

In 1964, Ramsey received orders to attend the first 10-month course at the Command and General Staff College in Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. This cross-training experience was quite beneficial for Ramsey, as he was able to learn what other Army organizations were doing. This led him to do his job better and also to support others better. He graduated in 1965.

From Fort Leavenworth, Ramsey went to the Medical Service Agency of the Combat Development Command at Fort Sam Houston. Here, he worked on the reorganization of the TO&E army veterinary service units. Personnel and equipment evaluation was based on early reports from Vietnam.

From 1967 to 1971, Ramsey was assigned to the Office of the Surgeon General, first as assistant Chief, then as Chief, Professional Services Office. He continued his reorganization work of the TO&E army veterinary service units. Ramsey was also able to significantly increase the number of validated positions for graduate training of veterinary officers. At the request of the Chief, Veterinary Corps, Brig. Gen. George A. Kuhn, Ramsey also developed a *Veterinary Corps Officers Guide*. This guide was created to orient new Veterinary Corps Officers.

Ramsey received orders for the War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, in 1971. He was the first veterinary officer to attend the resident course.

Upon graduation in 1972, Ramsey was assigned back to the Office of the Surgeon General. He served as Chief, Food Inspection Policy Office, then later as Chief, Professional Policy and Doctrine Office, and as Senior Veterinary Corps Staff Officer and Chief, Field Inspection Office, Office, Chief, Veterinary Corps. During his service at the Office of the Surgeon General, there were 25 separate in-depth studies of the Army Veterinary Service, all with the sole objective of

eliminating the service. As the staff officer for each study, Ramsey had to educate each group as to the diverse nature of the Veterinary Corps' duties. There were studies by the Army IG, the Surgeon General's Office, by the Government Accounting Office, and by the Judge Advocate General's Office, among others. None of the studies were able to reduce the Veterinary Corps in any way.

Ramsey was assigned as the United States Army Europe Veterinarian and as the Assistant Chief of Staff for Veterinary Services, 7th Medical Command, United States Army, Europe, from 1977 to 1980. He expanded an international veterinary medical training conference, usually held in Garmisch, to enable veterinary officers serving overseas to garner continuing education credits. Ramsey also emphasized the Combat Casualty Care surgical program in Europe, using goats for training. He also worked closely with the Air Force in Europe where he began the process of integrating the Air Force Veterinary Service into the Army's Veterinary Service.

On 2 October 1980, Ramsey was promoted to brigadier general. He then returned to the ZI [Zone of Interior] where he became the Chief, Veterinary Corps, Office, Surgeon General, United States Army. In March 1984, he was given the additional duty of Deputy Commander, United States Army Medical R&D Command, Fort Detrick, Maryland. In this assignment, he oversaw the Army take-over of the Air Force Veterinary Service. He also revised the *Veterinary Officers Guide* and republished it. He instigated a program whereby colonels in R&D who had never been overseas were sent overseas for assignment, taking the place of other colonels who had been overseas a number of times. It raised a fuss, but in the long run proved fruitful. During this entire tour he also served as Assistant Surgeon General for Veterinary Services and as the Acting Department of Defense Executive Agent for Veterinary Services.

Ramsey retired in February 1985, but was called back to active duty the following year to investigate why the OD plastic bag wrapper on Meals Ready to Eat [MRE] packets were swelling. A comprehensive team investigated, detailing the cause of the problem and what corrective measures were needed. Once implemented, these corrective measures took care of the problem. The problem was solved in less than eight weeks.

Since retirement, Ramsey has spent his time farming and ranching in Uvalde, Texas.

Personal Data

Date and Place of Birth: 1 May 1929, Rock Springs, Texas

Parents: Reynolds Allen Ramsey and June Burdette Ramsey

Marriage: Lucette Claudine Reboul

Children: Randal Reynolds Ramsey and Ramsay Allen Ramsey (Twins)

2d Marriage: Mary Lou Cain

Career Summary

1955

Basic Officers Course, Fort Sam Houston, Texas
First lieutenant, 4 Jan 1955

1955

United States Army Veterinary School, Chicago, Illinois

1955 to 1957

Commander, 73d Medical Detachment, Veterinary Service, La Rochelle,
France

1957 to 1958

Veterinarian, Berlin Command, USAREUR, Germany
Captain, 15 May 1958

1958 to 1961

Veterinary Officer and Preventive Medicine Officer, Fort Leonard Wood,
Missouri

1962 to 1964

Veterinary Officer and Preventive Medicine Officer, United States
Military Academy, West Point, New York
Major, 27 Mar 1963

1964 to June 1965

Student, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

Jul 1965 to Jan 1967

Project Officer, Doctrine Division, United States Army Combat Developments Command Medical Service Agency, Fort Sam Houston, Texas

Lieutenant Colonel, 30 December 1966

Feb 1967 to Jul 1971

Assistant Chief, later Chief, Professional Services Office, Assistant for Veterinary Services, Office, Surgeon General, United States Army, Washington, DC

Aug 1971 to Jun 1972

Student, United States Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania

Colonel, 8 May 1972

Jun 1972 to Jun 1977

Chief, Food Inspections Policy Office, later Chief, Professional Policy and Doctrine Office, later Senior Veterinary Corps Staff Officer and Chief, Food Inspection Office, Office, Chief, Veterinary Corps, Office, Surgeon General, United States Army, Washington, DC

Jul 1977 to Nov 1980

Assistant Chief of Staff for Veterinary Services, 7th Medical Command, United States Army, Europe and United States Army Europe Veterinarian Brigadier general, 2 October 1980

Nov 1980 to Mar 1984

Chief, Veterinary Corps, Office, Surgeon General, United States Army, Washington, DC; Assistant Surgeon General for Veterinary Services, Office, Surgeon General, United States Army, Washington, DC; Acting Department of Defense Executive Agent for Veterinary Services, Office,

Surgeon General, United States Army, Washington, DC.

Mar 1984 to Feb 1985

In addition to the above, was assigned Deputy Commander, United States Army Medical R&D Command, Fort Detrick, Frederick, Maryland

Awards

Distinguished Service Medal
Legion of Merit (with one Oak Leaf Cluster)
Army Commendation Medal

