

CAPTAIN RALPH B. BERRY
MEDICAL CORPS, U. S. NAVY

Ralph Bryon Berry was born in Tyndall, South Dakota, on September 25, 1911, son of the late Dr. Sherman Grant Berry and Mrs. Nettie Louise (Barber) Berry. He attended Southern State Teachers College, Springfield, South Dakota; the University of South Dakota at Vermillion; Creighton Medical School, Omaha, Nebraska, and holds the degrees of Bachelor of Science and Doctor of Medicine. Commissioned Lieutenant (junior grade) in the Medical Corps of the U. S. Navy on July 20, 1937, he subsequently advanced in rank, attaining that of Captain, to date October 1, 1953.

Following his appointment in the U. S. Navy in 1937, he interned at the Naval Hospital, San Diego, California, prior to reporting in September 1938, as Medical Officer of the USS CHAUMONT. Detached from that transport in September 1940, he was assigned to the Naval Hospital, Mare Island, California, where he served as Medical Officer until November 1940. Following duty in connection with the Labor Board and Compensation at the Navy Yard, Puget Sound, Washington, he was ordered in August 1941 to the Naval Air Station, San Diego, California. He remained there for duty concerning Industrial Hygiene, after the United States entered World War II, December 8, 1941, until September 1944.

He joined the USS SAN JUAN as Senior Medical Officer and for "out-standing services as one of the Medical Officers assigned to the first relief party ashore off Tokyo, Japan, to rescue Allied Prisoners of War..." he received a Letter of Commendation, with authorization to wear the Commendation Ribbon, from the Commander THIRD Fleet. The citation continues in part:

"Upon arrival at the Omori Prison Camp he was detailed to supervise the preparation of the ill prisoners confined to the camp dispensary and to assist in their evacuation in small boats in the hospital ship lying off shore. Conditions in the camp were hazardous with treachery in the part of armed Japanese guards expected momentarily. The suffering, starved state of the prisoners and evidence of cruelty and deprivation which had been inflicted on them by their captors tried mens' nerves to the breaking point. Commander Berry coolly, calmly, kindly and with efficiency performed his duties uninterrupted for long hours and until the 1,300 prisoners had been liberated and transferred safely aboard the hospital ship USS BENEVOLENCE. At a later period he took part in the rescue missions as a Senior Medical Officer of the USS SAN JUAN which was the flagship of the Commodore assigned in charge of all Prisoners of War relief measures in the Tokyo Bay area and in Central, Southern and Northern Honshu..."

Detached from the SAN JUAN in January 1946, he returned to duty ashore serving for seven months at the Navy Yard, Pearl Harbor, T. H. He next attended a course in preventive medicine at Harvard University School of Public Health, Boston, Massachusetts, from which he received

the degree of Master of Public Health in June 1947. He then reported as Officer in Charge of Epidemic Unit EIGHTY, Naval Hospital, San Diego, California, with additional duty in connection with preventive medicine in the Eleventh Naval District, and as Chief of Research at the San Diego Naval Hospital. In May 1949 he transferred in a similar capacity to Epidemic Control Unit #5 in the Eleventh Naval District.

Reporting in August 1949 for duty in the Medical Corps Branch, Personnel Division, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Navy Department, Washington, D. C., he remained there until ordered to the Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia, for instruction. After completing the course there in February 1962, he was attached to the Naval Medical School, National Naval Medical Center, Bethesda, Maryland, with additional duty in the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery. Duty in the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery became his primary assignment in May 1952. While there he served additionally as Liaison Officer between the Bureau and the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations.

In August 1954, he was assigned to the Field Branch of the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery, Brooklyn, New York, and in August of the next year became Chief of that Branch. He remained there until September 1958 and after a tour of duty with the U. S. Naval Mission to Brazil, Rio de Janeiro, he returned to the United States, reporting in September 1961 as District Medical Officer, Third Naval District, with Headquarters in New York, New York. He was ordered detached in July 1964 for duty at the Army Desert Test Center, Salt Lake City, Utah.

In addition to the Commendation Ribbon, Captain Berry has the American Defense Service Medal; the American Campaign Medal; the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with silver star (five engagements); the World War II Victory Medal; the Navy Occupation Service Medal, Asia Clasp; the China Service Medal; the National Defense Service Medal; and the Philippine Liberation Ribbon.

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