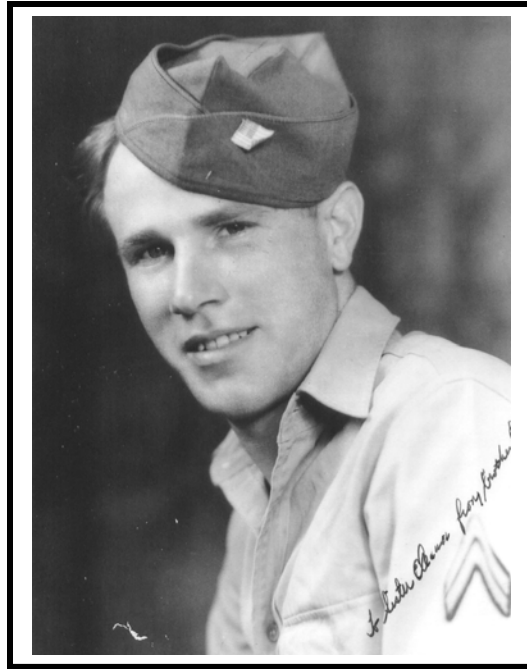




Asiatic-Pacific Service Medal



American Service Medal



25th Infantry Division



90th Field Artillery Battalion

Richard Gerald Berkemeyer
Private First Class U.S. Army
19 October 1939 – 21 June 1945

Richard was born on 15 March 1916 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He later moved to Scranton for a while, then to Allentown, Pennsylvania, circa 1932. He lived in Allentown and then for a short while in East Texas, Pennsylvania, with his sister, when he enlisted in the Army as a Private in Philadelphia on 19 October 1939. After two months of basic training and training as a Supply Clerk, he was assigned to Schofield Barracks on the Island of Oahu in Hawaii. He arrived in Hawaii in December 1939. Sometime after the Japanese Attack on Schofield and Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, Richard was assigned to the 25th (“Tropical Lightning”) Infantry Division, 90th Field Artillery (105mm Howitzer) Battalion. In November 1942 the Division underwent intensive jungle and amphibious warfare training, and on 16 December 1942 sailed for Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands to relieve the 1st Marine Division. They landed on 4 January 1943, and commenced offensive operations against the Japanese on 7 January. In less than a month, the 25th Division wiped out the Japanese dug in on Mount Austin, and then conducted an envelopment through the jungle to cut off retreating Japanese forces. The Division was then committed to seize remaining Japanese-held islands in the Solomons, and from 3 July 1943 through 6 October 1943 participated in the seizure of New Georgia, Vella LaVella, Sasavele, and Kolombangara. Upon the conclusion of the Solomons Campaign the Division was sent to New Zealand for rest and training, and then moved to New Caledonia on 8 February 1944 to prepare for the invasion of the Philippines. On 11 January 1945 the Division landed on Luzon at San Fabian, meeting fierce resistance as it liberated key towns along the left flank of the 6th Army. As they drove toward Manila, they attacked Japanese forces in the Caraballo Mountains on 21 February 1945, fighting through Japanese defenses on one hill after the other. After serving over five and a half years in the Army with two and a half years in combat zones and contracting malaria, Richard was sent home from the Philippines for discharge. For his service, he earned the American Defense Service Medal and the Asiatic-Pacific Service Medal. He arrived in the States on 28 April 1945, and was discharged as a Private First Class at Fort Dix, New Jersey, on 21 June 1945. He then settled in Allentown. In 1946 he and his brother **Donald Charles Berkemeyer**, who served in the Army Air Corps during World War II, opened their own automobile upholstery shop, the Berkemeyer Trim Shop, on 5th Street in Allentown. Richard married **Marie Chubirka** (14 September 1914 – 17 April 1998) on 16 May 1946. They had two daughters, **Linda Jane** and **Sandra Lee**. Richard retired in 1978 and moved to Quakertown, Pennsylvania, where he died at home two years later on 19 July 1980. He and Marie are buried side-by-side at Highland Memorial Park in Allentown. Richard’s parents were **Alfred Donald Berkemeyer** (1 February 1884 – 21 June 1941) and **Grace Martha Reedy** (16 June 1884 – 16 May 1962).



Landing on Guadalcanal