

CORPORAL CHARLES JOSEPH BERRY
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS, (DECEASED)

Charles Joseph Berry was born in Lorain, Ohio, on July 10, 1923, son of Carl and Caroline Berry. He was graduated from Lorain High School, Lorain, Ohio, in 1941. On October 1 of the same year he enlisted in the U. S. Marine Corps at Cleveland, Ohio, and received his boot training at the Marine Base, Parris Island, South Carolina. He had further training at the Marine Base, Quantico, Virginia, and New River, North Carolina, and in June 1942 he was promoted to Private First Class.

Berry left the United States in March 1943, and began his overseas duty at New Caledonia. He also saw action at Guadalcanal, Vella LaVella, Bougainville, participated in the raid on Koairi Beach and the action at Empress Augusta Bay. He returned to the States in February 1944, and remained stateside until July 1944, when he returned to Hawaii. He received his promotion to Corporal in July 1944. He departed from Hawaii and in February 1945 arrived at Iwo Jima.

Corporal Berry was killed in action on March 3, 1945 while serving with the First Battalion, Twenty-Sixth Marines, Fifth Marine Division on Iwo Jima. For his heroic action at the cost of his life he was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor with the following citation:

Medal of Honor: "For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as Member of a Machine-Gun crew, serving with the First Battalion, Twenty-Sixth Marines, Fifth Marine Division, in action against enemy Japanese forces during the seizure of Iwo Jima in the Volcano Island, on 3 March 1945. Stationed in the front lines, Corporal Berry manned his weapon with alert readiness as he maintained a constant vigil with other members of his gun crew during the hazardous night hours. When infiltrating Japanese soldiers launched a surprise attack shortly after midnight in an attempt to overrun his position, he engaged in a pitched hand grenade duel, returning the dangerous weapons with prompt and deadly accuracy until an enemy grenade landed in the fox-hole. Determined to save his comrades, he unhesitatingly chose to sacrifice himself and immediately dived on the deadly missile, absorbing the shattering violence of the exploding charge in his own body and protecting the others from serious injury. Stout-hearted and indomitable, Corporal Berry fearlessly yielded his own life that his fellow Marines might carry on the relentless battle against a ruthless enemy and his superb valor and unfaltering devotion to duty in the face of certain death reflect the highest credit upon himself and upon the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country."

He was also posthumously awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

In addition to the Medal of Honor and Purple Heart Medal, Corporal Berry was entitled to the American Area Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal and the World War II Victory Medal.

NAVY - Biographies Branch, 01-450
Tel. LI. 56700, Ext. 64646
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