

In Memory of  
Captain Thomas Pratt U.S.M.C  
July 14, 1936 to June 10, 2018  
Echo Raiders 2<sup>nd</sup> battalion 1<sup>st</sup> Marines  
1966 to 1967

As I look back on my time in Vietnam, I can say with pride and humility that Echo 2/1 (1966-1967) never disgraced its colors or dishonored the Marines that preceded our service. Easy 2/1 at Guadalcanal and Easy 2/1 at Chosin Reservoir set the standard and Echo 2/1 tried hard to live up to their example. In Vietnam, our commanding officer led from a position of honor, loyalty, and integrity. He knew no other way.

He never expected his men to do more than he himself was willing to do. When we slept in the mud, he slept in the mud. When we spent a cold wet Thanksgiving night under the floorboards of a hooch, he spent the night with us. We ate, then he ate; when C rations were in short supply, he went without. Wounded twice on the same day, he chose to evacuate his men first, placing his men's wellbeing ahead of his own safety and comfort. Whenever possible, a wounded Marine awaiting evacuation would receive a handshake or the firm but gentel grasp of his shoulder and a few words "I am proud to of served with you". That was our Skipper.

Our Skipper was a proud man, not proud of his own accomplishments, but rather proud of the boys he led. He considered loyalty to his boys a duty, not a virtue. The crucible of war made us a family. A family who has shared life and death experiences on a daily bases, an experience we must once more face and in doing so we say farewell to our Commanding Officer.

If the Army and the Navy ever look on Heaven scenes, they will find the streets are guarded by the United States Marines. With your next duty station awaiting your arrival and until the time comes when we are once again reunited under your command, Semper Fi Skipper, Semper Fi.

Epilog: And when he gets to heaven St. Peter a will tell another Marine reporting Sir, I've served my time in hell. "Unknown Marine Guadalcanal."