

TRIBUTE FOR 1ST LT. HERBERT A. PRATTE
Platoon Leader - Company C
628th TD Battalion -- US Army

My Dad, Herbert A. Pratte, was in the US Army and became a Platoon Leader of Company C of the 628th Tank Destroyer Battalion fighting in Europe. He and his men formed strong life-long bonds from what they all experienced, I am sure, and I remember my Dad kept in touch with all the men who survived with him, mainly through the exchange of holiday cards and notes that they would usually include about themselves and their families. This card exchange continued throughout their lives from what I remember. As they all grew older, slowly there would be one year or another, where my Dad would receive a card -- not from his service buddy, but from his wife or other family member with the news that her husband/father had passed away during the year. My Dad lived to the age of 84 himself.

My Dad earned the Bronze Star and Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Clusters (from the Huertgen Forest), as well as others according to the notes he left me and had me type up for him toward the end of his life, along with copies of records from the US Army.

My father married in the year 1949 and had two daughters. He became an employee of what was then known as "New England Telephone and Telegraph Company." Other than the first couple of years of his life, he spent the rest in the small town of Warren, Rhode Island, where "everyone knows your name" as they might say! He was involved in local politics for a while and was someone you could count on. From the time he was a child, he learned and loved to play the banjo, which he also had with him while training in the Army. He loved playing and bringing people together.

My Dad always remembered veterans, held various fundraisers and was also a VFW Post Commander of Post 122 in Warren, Rhode Island, where we lived. This Post was named the Stevens-LaRoche-Pratte Post. The name "Pratte" was added in honor of my Dad's older brother, Capt. Charles F. Pratte, Jr., who was an honored pilot of the 7th AAF in the Pacific, who became MIA and never returned home after one of his missions. (I have a tribute to my Uncle Charles on the site: www.goldstarfamilyregistry.com .)

When my Dad died, he also was the proud grandfather of 6 grandchildren and his first great-grandson had just been born. I now have a total of 5 grandsons of whom he'd be a very proud great-grandfather as well.

I love my Dad with all my heart and when I look back now and read of so much more information and books that are now written, I realize even more what he and our men endured.

I don't have many photos of my Dad's Army days, so if anyone reading this might have some of Company C, or if their relative might have known my Dad, I'd love to hear from you.

I would happily like to mention though that in the “Units” section of this website, on the 628th page, there is a group photo donated by Ms. Sylvia Sine Whitaker. Much to my pleasant surprise, there was my Dad sitting on the ground right in front. He is located in the front-center as you look at this picture.

Sincerely,

Ms. Rita D. Alderson (formerly Pratte)
Very Proud Daughter of 1st Lt. Herbert A. Pratte, US Army