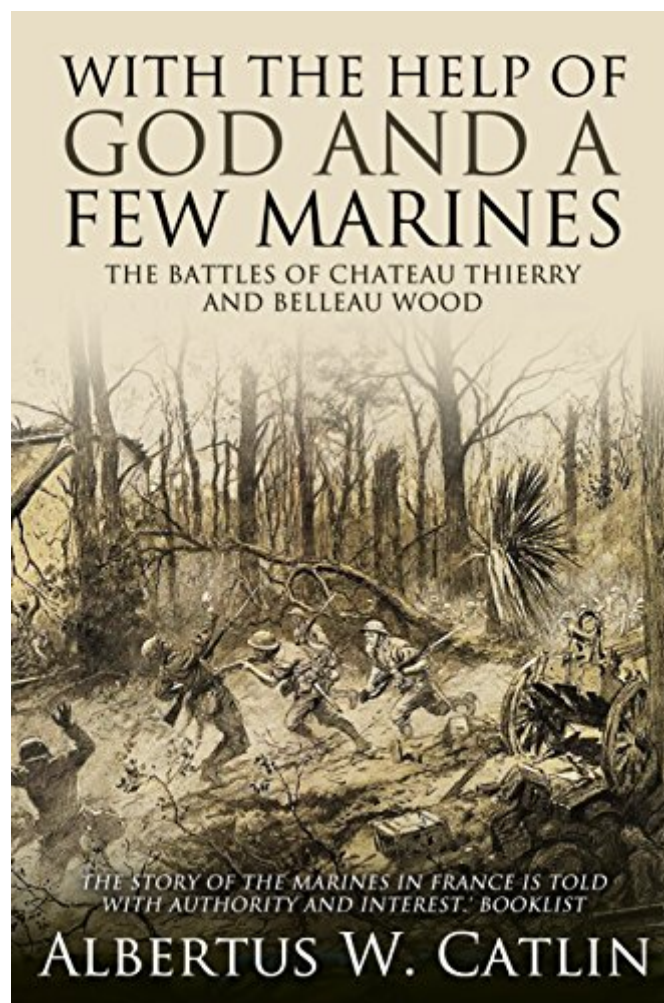


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"With The Help Of God And A Few Marines": The Battles Of Chateau Thierry And Belleau Wood



Synopsis

•When the United States declared war on Germany, a thrill went through the Marine Corps, for we were fighting men all and we learned that Marines were to be rushed over to France to take their stand on the Frontier of Liberty beside the battle-scarred veterans of France and Great Britain. •Brigadier General Albertus W. Catlin and his fellow marines were among the first American soldiers sent across to France in World War One and within months they were thrown into the thick of the action. As the Germans made a last ditch attempt to break through allied lines and capture Paris it was the marines who stood in their way. In the bloody days of June 1918 Catlin and his small band of marines fought ferociously against the Germans, utilising all the training that they had been through and showing the true metal of the marines. It is a period that has gone down as one of the greatest achievements of the United States Marines Corps. This fascinating history of the marines and their involvement in World War One was written during Catlin's recovery period after he had been shot by a sniper during the sixth day of the Battle of Belleau Wood. •The story of the marines in France is told with authority and interest. •" Booklist •It is one of the books about the American war effort which is well worth keeping as well as reading. •" Outlook •A well-written and complete account. •" Library Bulletin Albertus W. Catlin (1868-1933) was a career soldier who had received the Medal of Honor for leading the 3rd Marine Regiment at Vera Cruz, Mexico and for displaying distinguished conduct in battle. • He published •With the Help of God and a Few Marines in 1919.

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Customer Reviews

This interesting book written by one of those times Colonel and later on Brigadier General Albertus Catlin USMC, can be divided in two main areas: The first one is an extensive and detailed narration of the battle accomplished in the year 1918 at Belleau Wood, 35 miles northwest of Paris, during the 1st World War. The second area is a summarized history of the USMC since its organization on November 10, 1775 until 1919 and a short but keen study by the author of the consequences that USA participation on that war would bring to the future of this country. The mentioned first area sometimes becomes heavy and bored due to the meticulous description of the fighting related with this battle, which was so important for the destiny of the war that the Belleau Wood (Bois de Belleau) was afterward renamed by the French as Bois de la Brigade de Marine in memory of the tenacity the Marine Corps fought there until its recovery from the German army. Reading of this book should be recommended to anyone interested in learning about the penalties suffered by the warriors and the bravery, performance and discipline of the USMC members.

Excellent book written by one of the Marine commanders on the ground at Belleau Wood. Written in 1919, it is a fresh from the trenches view of the battle, and the author is able to convey the pulse of the men he was fighting with very effectively as it was still fresh in his mind and heart as he started writing it. Add it to your WW1 library.

The portion of the story about the actual battle of Belleau Wood was somewhat tedious. It was good, interesting, just long and drawn out. What I really enjoyed was reading the last few chapters about the era's prior to WW I. It's interesting to me, as a former Marine, officer and enlisted, with a son that recently went through boot camp at San Diego, how little has changed, at least in terms of attitude and philosophy toward training and what makes a Marine a Marine. Also interesting to read his comments about America's role in the world prior to the wars and how applicable his ideas from the early 1900's are still applicable today.

Good account of an officer who was there, who loved The Corps and his country. Such transcends time, it lived on, after Belleau Wood, Iwo Jima, Chosen Reservoir, Khe Sahn and now-Falluja. We called, they answered, and paid dearly. We owe them a debt we can never truly repay. As I type, the Japanese Army was rounding up the pitiful, tattered remnants of U.S. Forces in the Philippines for the Bataan Death March 75 years ago today. We must never, ever forget what our freedom cost! You and I can't fully understand what combat is, and what it is not, if we have not been there. We owe them out respect, honor and love. Thanks to all our service personnel! As an aside, the author warns against blind allegiance to, and trust in, the "benevolent state" and its bureaucracy as he closes. European statism was dangerous in 1914, and is, unfortunately alive and well today, living in the US. Self-discipline and individual liberty are vital to the health and preservation of our nation, and are the lifeblood of real patriotism. The "Ideal Patriot" thus compares to Catlin's "Ideal Marine"-one's character is reflected in the "greater good", be it Country or Corps. Have we lost sight of our national character? I pray not! And I pray that those who sacrificed so much did not do so in vain!

It is obvious from the beginning that Catlin is a Marine. His use of terms common in the Corps but known little elsewhere such as "over the fence" which was used exclusively at Paris Island proves his familiarity. Throughout the book he never fails to mention the prevailing discipline within the ranks but he always takes the time to explain the purpose of discipline as well as how well Marines understand discipline. He ends with a plea to Americans to learn the lessons this war taught and to avoid the lessons taught before the war began.

General Albertus Catlin writes a fine history of the United States Marine Corps just prior to and during American involvement during WWI. He discusses the difference between the regular US Army troops and the spirit of the Marines. He includes the overview of their training, moral and learned team work. Since this was written nearly 100 years ago, it becomes a classic to see the nature of World War I from his view.

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