

The Marines would die for Old Baptist "Doc"—He almost died for them

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YOU would turn your pockets inside out for the United War Work Campaign if you knew dear old "Doc" of the Marines, a white-haired, slow-speaking padre, who is Y. secretary with the leathernecks and so beloved by them that it's past telling. He was a preacher in Arizona—had been, I think, a missionary with the lepers when the war came, and he went from his pulpit to the Y.

They have always loved him, the Marines. I think it was because he had the genius for meeting all mankind brother-to-brother. And because he would not spare himself any hardship that the boys had to undergo.

If they hiked, he would not ride. If they had to march half-way across France as fast as their legs would carry them, Doc marched, too, and what is more, carried the full pack, lest any boy should ever say old Doc did not know what a real hike meant.

Of course, their devotion became a cult on the Marne when it was he who took the hind end of a litter and went out through a very rain of shells to bring in and save the wounded colonel. And they did save him. Can't you picture it—the two of them creeping over the treacherous ground, with the private turning now and then and hissing back to poor old bulky Doc not to "stick up so far" in the air?

That little expedition dropped Doc unconscious with gas and shrapnel, and when he came to he found that quite mysteriously, all his Y ensignia had been cut away and Marine emblems sewed on in their place.

Doc holds services now and then. I know of one a young Jew organized. It was held in a deserted church which a volunteer squad had spent three hours in cleaning for the occasion—three hours routing the dust and cobwebs and litter of fallen plaster and broken glass. Then the congregation trooped in and the service began with the distribution of rosaries fished from Doc's capacious pockets for the Catholic boys, some of whom had lost theirs in the fight.

They have a way of looping their rosary through their left shoulder strap and wearing it into battle as the knights of old wore their lady's colors into the jousts. It is an inspiring thing to see a whole company thus beautifully uniformed, but sometimes they come back with the beads torn away.

Well, Doc distributed his own supply and I doubt if a passerby at that moment would have suspected him of being a Baptist clergyman. Doc—and indeed most of the padres of the front—have to rake their memories to tell what denomination was theirs before they took this great communion.

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UNITED WAR WORK CAMPAIGN

