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Theodore E. Boyd World War I Collection - Handwritten Memoirs and Rosters

Extracted on Apr-19-2024 10:06:22

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executing a command. Sands halted us, gave the unfortunate corporal a scolding and asked the cannoneers how the command should have been carried out. It happened that I was the only one who answered correctly. Sands thereupon demoted the corporal and put me in his place. Later in the morning, through profiting by similar errors on the part of my acting superiors, I found myself successively a sergeant and a platoon commander. Finally, however, I made a faux pas. Sands halted the battery, rode over to me, and said. "Boyd, I was beginning to think you had some sense- Now I see you are just as damned stupid as anybody in the battery- Get off that horse and back on the caisson where you belong." I can still see his squinting gray eyes and projecting lower lip as he spoke to me. It was really impersonal with him, I have no doubt. He was a good soldier, and he was simply teaching me, as recruits no doubt have been taught ever since military discipline began. I went back to the caisson, and was kidded that evening about my meteoric career of the day.

We had formal guard mounts, I believe once a week, and the fifteen training companies took turns sending a guard detail. Sands made quite an affair of it when our battery staged the guard mount. A day or two beforehand he put us through competitive drill in the manual of arms, and selected sixteen men. I was chosen in the group, though ten or twelve others were picked before me. We had to buy new patent leather chin straps, get our uniforms starched and pressed, and clean out equipment until it was perfect. Though artillery cadets, we had rifles for drill. I was somewhat

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