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Theodore E. Boyd World War I Collection - Memoirs and Correspondence Sent to Family, unnumbered

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second lieutenant, Boyd. I was the only American billeted in a house on the outskirts of town. I was asleep at about 8 A. M. when an enlisted man came in to wake me and tell me that my horse was waiting outside. He said the battery was about to move out. Breakfast was out of the question, for everyone had eaten. I did not have time even to shave. I got into my clothes. I asked the enlisted man to gather up my things and put them in a wagon. Then I mounted and hurried to catch up with Captain Woodward on the road.

Woodward had a sheet of typed orders for me. He had detailed me to command the two gun crews. He rode with us off the road and posted us on that hillside. Our horses were led away. At our back were woods, in front a wide field sloping downward. About two miles ahead, hidden from our sight by hills, was our infantry. They were scheduled to move forward on an attack some time during the day. When the infantry moved we were supposed to begin firing, contributing to a rolling barrage that kept ahead of their advance. The trick was that we were not told when the attack would start. The infantrymen were to notify us by rocket signals when they were about to jump off. Therefore we had to keep a vigilant watch all day for the rockets. When we saw them I was to record the exact time, so the brass would know that we were not cheating. And I had to memorize the typed orders Woodward had given me.

The morning passed and nothing happened. I set two men to keep watch and told the rest to get in under the trees for such shelter as they could find there. They tried to make a fire, but everything was too wet. Noon passed and I was hungry. For reasons explained in my last letter, I had had nothing to eat since mid-afternoon of the day before. Finally one of my sentries called to me. "Two officers coming, Lieutenant. I think one of them is General Pershing." (That's the way he said it.) He was right. General Pershing was accompanied by General Summerall, then commanding our brigade.

They rode up to our post and stopped. I walked forward, saluted and identified myself and my unit. I don't think Pershing ever looked at me at all. He made a fine figure on horseback. He just sat there like a statue, gazing into the distance. General Summerall said "Let

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