

17622  
March 12, 1919.

Mrs. Charles H. Sanderson, Darien Centre, N. Y.

Grave of Sergeant Edward A. Coyle, Co. H, 16th Infantry.

1. Your letter (undated) received here today, has aroused my deepest sympathy, and I can assure you that the only reason you have not been advised of the burial place of your son, is because there is no information as yet available.
2. During the heavy fighting in July, in which your son took part, there were a great many casualties. Burial officers had sometimes to work under fire, and in some cases this made marking of graves difficult. Sometimes also markings have been destroyed by enemy fire. The result has been that the field forces of the Graves Registration Service, who take up the work after the burial officers have performed their duty, have had to undertake the task of searching over all the ground where American troops fought, in order to locate and identify graves. I am glad to say that in this way, and owing to the zeal and devotion of the men employed, a great many graves have been located, which would otherwise have been overlooked. These forces have not as yet reported the finding of your son's grave, but a special request has been sent to the officer in charge of the work near Soissons, to use every effort to discover the grave.
3. I know how hard it all must seem to the bereaved and sorrowing mothers, but the Graves Registration Service is no respecter of persons, and the poorest mother in America will find that it is as ready and willing to serve her and to answer her inquiries, as to help a mother whose riches are of no avail in face of the common loss.
4. Just as soon as any information is obtained here, you will receive a notice from the Graves Registration Service, and in the meantime please believe that everything possible will be done to find your son's grave.

EED/ED.

CHARLES C. PIERCE  
Lieut. Colonel, Q.M.C., U.S.A.