

ALL GAVE SOME; SOME GAVE ALL

This week's veteran is Emmet Heiter father of Marguerite Jackson.

Emmet Heiter was raised east of Assumption. On December 11, 1909, at the age of 18, he traveled to Savannah, MO, to visit his Uncle Ham Mathias. Emmet decided that he would stay with Ham, and moved with him and his Aunt Fannie on west to Weatherly, MO. In March of 1910, he traveled to White Lake, SD, to stay with John Oakes who had lived three miles east of Assumption. Several people from the Assumption area had gone to South Dakota to farm. From White Lake, he went to Kimball, SD. Emmet kept traveling north until he reached Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, Canada in 1912 where he worked for the fire department until September 15, 1915, when he joined the Canadian Army.

After training at Camp Hughes, he was sent by train to Halifax, Nova Scotia, to be shipped to England. His troop ship was erroneously reported as sunk by torpedoes with the loss of 1,200. The 46th landed at Plymouth, England, on October, 31, 1915, from where they were sent to Camp Bramshott, England, for more training. By August, 1916, Emmet was in the trenches in France. He fought in the Battle of the Ancre Heights from October 1 to November 11, 1916, which was part of the wider first battle of the Somme. During the Battle of Somme, over one million soldiers were killed or wounded.

Moose Jaw was a city of about 20,000 in 1915. Of the 4,099 people sent from Moose Jaw to the front during World War I, only 1200 came home. Moose Jaw lost almost 15 percent of its population to the war.

Emmet wrote many letters home to his family during his time in France. Marguerite has those letters, and they are a poignant commentary of what it is like to be in war. In a letter dated October 18, 1916, Emmet says, "I know you can't imagine what it is like, or no one else that hasn't gone through it". Troops would be sent up to the trenches for a few days and then relieved to rest. Referring to one such foray, he mentioned how, "There were not nearly as many of us came back as had gone up to the front lines". Emmet was in France for seven months.

After being discharged in June of 1919, Emmet returned home to the farm because his father was very ill and would die in September of 1919. Emmet married Gertrude Campbell on February 12, 1921. They had six children: Jean, Delmar, Ilene(Midge), Rosalyn, Marguerite, Donna, and ten grandchildren. Emmet was supervisor and Justice of the Peace of Rural Township and a member of the Assumption Board of Education. He died April 24, 1977 at the age of 86.

Thank you, Sergeant-Major Emmet L. Heiter, for what you gave for us.