

# WAR EXPERIENCES OF LIEUT. BOOTH

Left C. P. R. Service In 1914 and  
Served Throughout War  
With Imperial Army

Back to the city, after seeing war service since December, 1914, Lieutenant J. O. Booth has returned and is at present staying with J. Hoesgood at 246 Balmoral street.

Employed in the yard office of the Canadian Pacific railway, he left at the end of 1914 and enlisted with the imperial cavalry, going across to France in May, 1915. Serving as dismounted cavalry, his unit took part in the advance at Loos in September, 1915, where the British advance failed to hold the ground won, owing to strategic errors. Three months later he sustained injuries that necessitated his return to England and for some months he was convalescing and later acted as gymnastic instructor at Aldershot.

In the summer of 1917, Lieutenant Booth, who had been a corporal in the cavalry, obtained a commission and went out with the east Yorkshires, taking part in the battles at Bullecourt, and at Passchendaele, where he went over the top three times. Like all who have spoken of Passchendaele, Lieutenant Booth says that it was the worst locality, along the whole front, and he had seen a soldier, who was being sucked down by the mud, shot in order to put him out of his agony, as he had gone completely insane. Then he was ordered to Italy, but just as they were entraining, the orders were cancelled, and he took part in Sir Julian Byng's show at Cambrai, where the tanks first appeared. Through the following winter he was with a divisional concert company, till March, which brought the big German offensive, when he was stationed at Peronne, and fought through the long rear guard fight as they retreated, till he reached Avert, and on April 16, 1918, he was at Wytchaerte ridge, and eight days later was in the big fight for Kemmel hill.

After the fight at Kemmel his regiment, which went in 550 strong, came out of the battle with four officers and 43 men. The bombardment at Kemmel was the worst of the whole war, both when the Germans were attacking and when the British and French were counter-

tacking. The British and French artillery were standing wheel to wheel when this bombardment was going on, and it was said that the shell fire cut eighteen feet from the height of the hill, which is an important rise overlooking the country for thirty miles.

From Kemmel the battalion was sent to assist the French at Reims, where they remained till May 27, when they were sent to the Aisne sector and bore their part in the nerve-racking retreat as the allies were pushed back to the Marne. The battalion was then sent back to rest and get reinforced, and took part in the big attack by the British on August 8, which was the beginning of the end, and on that day Lieutenant Booth saw the end of his war service, being blown up by a shell, which filled him with fragments of shell and shrapnel, some of which he carries with him today as souvenirs of the first and only wound that he received during the course of a career at the front which brought him close to death twice and again. It was Blighty for him then, and he was just out of hospital when the armistice was declared.

Replying to a question regarding what had been the cause of the German failure to win out when time and again he seemed to have the whole situation in his favor, Lieutenant Booth says that it was lack of transport. He had talked this matter over with a British officer who had been captured by the Germans during the course of their spectacular advance, and this officer said that, as soon as he got behind the German lines, he knew that they had lost the war. Transport was completely broken down, oxen were being used to do much of the hauling and even British prisoners were being compelled to drag the German guns into action.

## MOOSE HILL

Mr. and Mrs. H. Heyder returned home on Saturday having spent a week visiting friends in Fort William and Port Arthur.

Rev. Father Renaud held services in the Roman Catholic church on Sunday, April 6. These services are held the first Sunday in each month.

The ladies of the Roman Catholic church are giving a ball on Friday April 25, in aid of the church. The patronesses are Mesdames Maley, Clarke, Juffa, Sepenariviz and Valancourt. Everyone is cordially invited and all are guaranteed a good time.

Geo. Lamke lost a valuable horse