

Vineland Ont., March 2, 1918.

Christian Gascho,  
Baden Ont.

Dear Brother:- Greeting in the name of Jesus, who has loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood and has made us the Children of God, by adopting us into His family through the love and mercy of His own Beloved Son.

After being absent from home for a week, attending a business meeting at Goshen Indiana, I returned home on Friday afternoon. Your letter came to hand and was glad to to hear from you, and to learn that you are now settled in your new home. I trust and pray that you may be spared many years to enjoy your home and the blessings that it brings, and trust that you may be enabled to enjoy the benefit of more opportunity to engage in the work of the Master since you have more liberty and are less free from the cares and labors of life. After all, it is the time that we are enabled to spend in behalf of the work of the Lord that gives us the most enjoyment and the greatest amount of blessing. We are thus enabled to share with others the spiritual blessings that the Lord has granted us and are able to lay up treasures in Heaven which will return unto us after the treasures of earth are gone or are left behind us as we take our flight to the realms of glory.

I want to acknowledge with sincere thanks and gratitude the receipt of the Money Order for the amount of Forty-one Dollars and seventy-five cents \$41.75/ which represents the gratitude of many of the dear young brethren who have been helped to some extent by the labors which have been devoted to the interests of the Lord's people during these times of trial. What has been done has been willingly done and in trust that the Lord would bless it to accomplish the purpose which He has designed and which He alone could carry out by His power. We know that we are helpless as far as our relations with the powers of this world are concerned. We have no power of defense and we have no influence in the affairs of the nation to make or carry out its laws. But, If we have any favors with the Rulers that are over us it is because it has been the power of the Lord operating in them to permit us the enjoyment of the peace and privilege of worship which is granted to us. We feel that we have had more than is due us for the work that has been accomplished. We know that what is given is a token of the love of the brethren, and we accept it only as an offering to the Lord from them and a gift of the Lord to us. May another great blessing come to them from the Lord so that each may have his due portion and may the portion which comes to these dear young souls who so much desire to serve the Lord in the Spirit and in love and good will to men, be the largest and best portion of all, even the answer to the prayers that have been ascending to God for our complete liberty to worship our God and to live a life that is free from the necessity of doing military service, and then may there be another blessing return to the Government which gives us this liberty, - the blessing of national peace and prosperity.

The letter to the Prime Minister concerning the work of the Non-Resistant Relief Organization was received while Sir Robert Borden was away to the United States. He will reply when he returns to Ottawa. With love and best wishes, and with thanks for the kindness of all concerned, I am  
Yours in faith,

Vineland Ont., Mar. 2, 1918.

Anson Hallman,  
Preston, Ont.,  
Box 472.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter received and noted. There have been others whose appeal to Ottawa was refused. But the slip which accompanies your refusal also gives you permission to further prosecute your appeal, and requires that you send to the District Registrar a definite statement upon what you base your claim for appeal. A duplicate of these reasons must be sent along, and the District Registrar will forward your claim to Ottawa and the Judge will decide whether your appeal should be heard. This will be followed by a decision of some kind which will afford us some relief or will require a further appeal from us to the Government.

The following is the form which you will fill out and forward to Mr. W. E. Wisner, London.

Mr. W. E. Wisner,  
Registrar, under Military Service Act of 1917.  
London Ont.

Date, -----

Sir:-

I hereby give notice that I desire to further appeal to the Central Appeal Judge, that my claim for appeal as well as my claim for exemption from all military service may be allowed, basing my claims on the following grounds,-

1. The Mennonite Church, of which I am a member, forbids its members engaging in combatant and non-combatant Military service.
2. The Military Service Council has uniformly replied to all inquiries by members of our Churches that all Mennonites are excluded from the operation of the Military Service Act.

Serial Number, -----

Consecutive number, -----

Name, -----

Address, -----

Make another copy of this same letter, without the address to Mr. Wisner, and mark it, Duplicate of Claim, and enclose it with the letter to Mr. Wisner, and register your letter. If you have notice from Ottawa that your Appeal is allowed, send Mr. Wisner a statement of the matter, or a copy of the letter. Some of the other Brethren have received notice from Ottawa that their claim has been received and that they are notifying the District Tribunal and waiting until the District Tribunal allows the appeal. We feel that we will get justice from the Central Tribunal when once the cases come before that Court in the proper form. We must also pray that we may receive mercy from the Lord in this regard.

Yours in faith.

Have just returned from Indiana, so your letter would have received earlier attention. S.F.C.

Vineland Ont., Mar, 5, 1918.

L. J. Burkholder, Pres.  
D. W. Heize, Sec.

Dear Brethren:- Greeting.

Please find enclosed a copy of the letter to the Secretary of the Committee to interview the Government, regarding the work of the Non-Resistant Relief Organization, which is a reply to the one sent inquiring about the advisability of interviewing the Government about the Work of this Organization. It is very probable that a reply will be received from the Prime Minister as soon as he returns from his trip to the United States. In the mean time is there anything that needs to be done in preparation for this interview or anything that could be done toward preparing the brotherhood for the work that will need to be done in raising funds. As yet, we have nothing very definite from the Government regarding the attitude which they expect to take with reference to the total exemption of our brethren who have registered under the Military service Act, and have appealed for release from all duty. The Appeal Tribunals have been dismissing the appeals and staying off the final appeal to the Central Appeal Judge as long as possible. It is probable that we shall either hear soon of the decision of the Central Appeal Judge or receive word that he will not accept the cases and that our boys will be subject to the decisions of the Local and Appeal Tribunals. In that case we will be obliged to interview the Government in person for a final decision regarding our privileges. We are paying, however, for a favorable report from the Government.

Yours In Him,

Vineland Ont., Mar. 6, 1918.

Isiah Rosenburger,  
Guernsey Sask.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter of a few months ago was duly received. I was glad to learn that your boys were being allowed exemption from military service even though they had some difficulty in getting it. We are not yet in a position to say that we have full recognition of our faith. Yet, we trust that our Government will give us the recognition that we would like to have and which we feel we may expect. The exemption Tribunals have taken a different view of the situation than has the Military Service Council. The last named is the final Court for decision and has already given an interpretation stating that we are not under the power of the Act.

With reference to the Toronto Mission, concerning which you made some inquiry, I would say that the Mission is supported from voluntary contributions from the churches in Canada. It is the only Mission which we have in Canada and has been supported principally by the Ontario Congregations. I am sure that the workers there would feel glad to know that the congregations in the West were also interested in their work and are helping to support the cause there. Brother M. C. Cressman has charge of the funds for the support of the Mission and anything that your congregation might contribute would be acknowledged by him and be appreciated by all.

Sister Ada is likely with you again. We were glad for her presence and help in our Bible Study Course this winter. We are sorry that so many other matters came in the way so that we felt that we did not give the attention to the class which was due them. But we trust that all have received some help that will always prove a blessing to them in their work for the Master. With best wishes for yourself and family and regards to all inquiring friends. I am,

Yours in Christian faith,

*S. J. Cressman*

**J. R. EBERSOL**  
 MANUFACTURER OF  
**THE SPECIAL BAND CUTTER  
 AND SELF-FEEDER**

MILVERTON, ONT. Mar 8 1918

I. Hoffman,  
 Vineland, Ont.

Dear Bro. to an extent of our faith:

We are (thank

God) all fairly well hoping you are the same.

Yours of 2nd inst. received and noted; and thank you for the further information, and thank God for all good gifts. On Mar 2 I received notice of hearing of Appeal Before Central Appeal Judge, Ottawa, Ontario, for 9 of our Brethern, that their cases will be considered Mar 13th 1918,

And we have written papers in duplicate for each Bro, reasons of our Appeal for complete exemption. Have included all just reasons possible to best of our knowledge and each Bro has signed his own paper, and my assistant, our deacon, and myself have also signed them all but one which we expect to sign to-day. Have sent 8 of them yesterday, and expect to sign and send the other one to-day, all by Registered mail. As the notices say any thing we desire to say must be put in writing and that oral argument before the Central Appeal Judge is not permitted unless specially directed.

May God add His Blessings to our and <sup>your</sup> efforts, as it is easy for Him to help us if it is His Holy Will. 2 of the Brethern whose

(2)  
 appeal was made have no notice of hearing yet that I know of.

One Bro is not willing to appeal to Ottawa after being refused at Stratford, and I am astonished of him. I have urged him to appeal, but he did not consent as yet. ~~And~~ And besides it is as you say, some question the wisdom of appealing very much, and I think that is what keeps him from appealing, I hardly know if I should urge him more to appeal or not, I offered to appeal for him. and I do not know if he could appeal any more now or not, as he received his notice of refusal over a month ago. I am inclined to ask him again to appeal.

Now the most reason of my writing is about my son, who is a member of our church since July or Aug of 1914, and will be 21 years by 26th inst, if he lives. And in answer to your letter about Citizenship, He is willing to be a citizen of Canada if he can. Quite a few claim this can not be done as long as the war lasts, but I was told of a man, who I think is some kind of either reeve or Councillor, or some higher officer, who they say secured Citizenship papers from some Office in Ottawa.

Now I am sorry to trouble you more, but we are very anxious to know how we could secure the citizenship papers, and if it is possible for us to do so. And I beg you to inquire if, and how it can be done. Also let us know if you think it wise to keep on working in shop for me, or not. I need him. I will gladly pay you whatever your expense is if you let me know how much. We are very anxious for a very very early answer about this. Remember us in prayer as we hope to do for you.  
 J. R. Ebersol.

Matt. 28. 19-20

Go ye therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world.  
Amen.

Matt. 9. 37-38

Then saith he unto his disciples, The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few; Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he will send forth labourers into his harvest.

Foreign Mission Board of The Brethren in Christ Church



Gormley Mar, 8 th, 191 8

Eld S. F. Coffman.

Vineland. Ont.

Beloved Brother. GREETING.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 5 th inst.

Also copy of letter from The Prime Minister,s Secy. I have noted what you say relative to anything that might be done pending the reply from ~~###~~ Sir Robert direct, on the part of the churches re funds. According to my humble judgement, from the very fact, "that there still are scircumstances and conditions surrounding the action taken on the part of the Government, and the Millita department," which still leaves the matter of our "TOTAL EXEMPTION FROM ALL FORMS OF SERVICE" in doubt, and from the further fact, that until this matter is finally settled to our entire satisfaction, I feel quite sure that so far as our own BODY is concerned, it would be utterly useless to appeal to them for funds as per the purpose of the organization. so that personally I do not see that anything forther can be done until we have a reply from the Premier. Of course you understand I am only expressing my personal views, and not that of the organization.

Yours Fraternally.

*D. W. Heise*

Hesston Kans 3/11/18

S. F. Coffman  
Vinland  
Ont.

Dear Brother, "in Canada."  
They used to try to make me believe that I was lucky that I am a Canadian, because they Mennonite boys receive more consideration at in Canada.

I noticed by the paper this morning that Judge Beade refused our applications of appeal to the final Tribunal at Ottawa.



May I beg a few moments of your valuable time? A few questions came to me rather forcibly when I noticed the refusal.

Is the judge's decision a bluff or are we not able to get through to the tribunal at Ottawa?

If we can get through, are there any definite provisions made by the Government for non-resistants?

If we cannot get through, I suppose camp will come next. Are there any provisions as to what we as non-resistants may or may not do? That is in regards to donning the uniform and drilling?

No doubt you are acquainted with conditions in the U. S.. If the boys have enough back bone and are alert enough they get thru alright, but some are having quite a time.

Prospects are brighter at present here of getting the boys out of camp. A bill was passed thru both houses last week making provisions in some way for some of them to be given an opportunity to follow civil occupation instead of military. I suppose

The bill reads somewhat different than the way I have, but anyway the people here think that our boy will come under this bill.

Thanking you in advance for any information that you think will be of interest and value to me at this time.

Yours truly

Stanley C Bubarber  
Hesston  
Kans

Vineland Ont., Mar. 15, 1918.

Stanley Brubacher,  
Hesston Kans.

Dear Stanley:- Greeting in Jesus' name.

Your letter to hand and noted.

There has been no material change in the military situation as far as our people is concerned. Our boys have been making their appeals to the district Tribunals and they have been refused. They have appealed to the Central Appeal Judge, through the District Tribunals, and the permission to appeal to the Central Judge was refused by the District Tribunal. This is the report which you have no doubt read in the paper as concerning the action of Judge Road. There is, however, another step which may not have been mentioned. When the District Appeal Tribunal refuses to allow an appeal to the Central Appeal Judge, a notice is sent along on which it is stated that if the appellant desire to further prosecute his appeal to the Central Appeal Judge, he shall distinctly and clearly state his reasons for such an appeal and send with his appeal <sup>and copy of his reasons</sup> and the District Tribunal will then make a statement to the Central Appeal Judge and learn from him whether the appeal will be received by him. According to this program the Central Appeal Judge must act on every case that is prosecuted through the District Tribunals. The Central Judge is the final authority and the District Tribunals can not keep the cases out of his hands unless the reasons are too trivial. Our claims are based on the constitutionality of their calling Mennonites into military service.

Regarding this matter, I have had a letter from one of the Amish ministers, of the old order, stating that the case of eight of their young men was to come before the Central Appeal Judge on the 14th Inst. I have been very anxious to learn what the Judge decided relative to them. As yet I have not learned his decision. If he takes the position that the Military Service Council has taken and the interpretation that the Government has placed upon the matter in the War-Time Elections Act. We need have no further trouble in the matter. Both have stated that the Mennonites are exempted from all military service.

We have not been doing very much lately regarding pressing these cases. We felt that if we get a few cases before the Central Appeal Judge that we will have a precedent and can act further as is advisable. We trust that there will not need to be a camp exemption for our boys. We would expect them to act with wisdom and firmly regarding their convictions on army service, with the grace of God in their hearts. The Government knows the stand which we would expect to take. We do not defy, but would place ourselves under their power to suffer penalty rather than to serve in war.

Am glad to know that there is prospect of relief for our brethren in the United States. We need to pay further that these lives may be consecrated into the higher service of Christ. Remember the cause in prayer. May God bless you in work thereof.

Yours in faith

S. J. Coffman

Copies of Letters, Re Military Service Act, Exemptions for Mennonites

*Copies Sent by, C. Schrag-zurich.*

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE  
Military Service Branch

Office of Deputy Registrar under Military Service Act.

London Ontario, Feb. 7, 1918.

In your answer refer to H.F.Beresford.

Mr. Elmer Oesch,  
Zurich, Ont.

Dear Sir,-

Replying to your letter of the 5th inst, beg to state that if you belong to the Mennonite church you are exempt from Military Service.

Yours truly

Signed, W. E. Wismer,  
Deputy Registrar, Military District, No. 1.

HFB/CM.

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\Heading as above/

London Ont., March 15/18

Mr. Sam Gascho,  
Zurich, Ont.

Dear Sir,-

Answering your letter of the 14th. inst. in regard to Exemption Certificate, beg to advise that the matter of Exemption of Mennonites is now being under consideration, and as yet I have not received any ruling.

Yours truly,

Signed, W.E.Wismer,  
Deputy Registrar, under M.S.A.

Signed, per, H.F.Beresford,  
Assistant Deputy Registrar.

HFB/CE.

Vineland Ont., Mar. 13, 1918.

J. R. Ebersole,  
Milverton, Ont.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter of the 8th Instant received and noted. It affords me a great deal of pleasure to write you again, although I am not sure that I can give you all of the information that you would like. Am glad to learn that the cases of our brethren are at last coming before the Chief Justice and pray that he may deal with our brethren according to the spirit of the law which provides for religious liberty and seems to have intended special privileges regarding freedom from military service for those who hold that it is a sin against God to destroy or to give any assistance to the destruction of human life. May the many prayers that have ascended to God in this behalf be answered today. I feel that all of our brethren should have appealed their cases, although we have asked the Chief Justice to give the same consideration to those of our brethren who have not appealed as to those who have made application.

Regarding your son, I am glad to learn that he is a member of the Church and the fact that he has been a member for the length of time mentioned will stand in his favor. Regarding his age, I think that since he comes into the age limit now, he will be liable to be called when class 2 is called, unless there are other provisions for his exemption. The law says as follows, "Any class except class 1, shall include men who are transferred thereto from another class as hereinafter provided, and men who come into class 1 since the previous class was called out." As fast as the boys become of military age they will be called into the following classes.

Since you have been a resident of Canada for so long a time it may have considerable bearing on your application for citizenship. If the Government would not grant you citizenship now it could not interfere with your taking out intentional papers. I am sorry that I have not the direct information on this point. It might be well for you to go to Stratford to some one with whom you are acquainted and get legal advice. If you could see a Judge, he could give the information and arrange for the application. Since all of the Applications and Papers must go through his hands. Your son would be obliged to make application and would thus come under the military regulations of Canada. In case he were already a citizen of the United States he would have the privilege of becoming a citizen of Canada and enlisting in the Canadian army, and if he went to the United States as a citizen to register, he would be of no value to the United States army on account of the fact that all of our young men are retained in detention camps. His service here as a worker on harvesting and threshing machines could be as valuable as his service anywhere. I hope that you will be able to make satisfactory arrangement regarding your son. He has only a few days until he is of age and if possible he should then receive either his citizen papers or papers declaring his intention to become a citizen of Canada as soon as permissible. If he thus comes under the regulations of Canada, he may continue where he likes as far as employment is concerned but would not be expected to engage in labor directly associated with the army. Our people should all do what they can to help the world to live. Wish you God's blessing in all your efforts, I am,

Yours in faith and for His Kingdom,

J. R. Ebersole

Waterloo Ont

Mar 19<sup>th</sup> 1918

Mr. F. J. Kaufman  
Vineland, Ont.

Dear Sir:

I have a copy of a letter  
which you have received of  
Mr. Newcomb, granting us  
total exemption. The copy  
of this letter was given me by  
Mrs. Wismer formerly of  
Niagra U. S. A.

For the protection of the  
other boys of our church I ask  
permission to make copies  
of the same.

I remain

yours in Him

J. W. Frey (M. B. C. Church)  
Waterloo, Ont.  
Box 402



403.

Ottawa, March 19, 1918.

Dear Sir,-

In further reference to your letter of the 20th of February, addressed to the Prime Minister, and referred to the Hon. Mr. Rowell, Mr. Rowell asks me to advise you that a Committee of the Cabinet will meet you on Tuesday, the 26th of March, at eleven-thirty a.m., Room 82, East Block, Ottawa.

Will you kindly confirm this appointment.

Yours very truly,

*J. Z. Allen*  
Assistant Secretary.

S. F. Coffman, Esq.,  
Secretary, Non-Resistant Relief Organization,  
Vineland, Ont.

JBA/J.



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From *Ottawa* *March 21* 1918

To *D. H. Coffman*  
*vi*

*Have had to change your appointment to eleven-fifty a.m. Wednesday next Twenty second*

*J. B. Allen*



THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917.

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REPORTS OF CASES

DECIDED BY

THE CENTRAL APPEAL JUDGE.

REPORTER :

J. LORN McDOUGALL, Barrister-at-law.

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MARCH 19, 1918.

No. 10.

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RE J. RODTKA (SERIAL NO. 377796 M.C.)

Temporary exemptions allowed to farmers are in the nature of licenses, conditional on the efforts of the person exempted being such as to justify continued exemption.

*February 20, 1918.*

*The Central Appeal Judge:* The need for troops cannot be exaggerated. On the other hand, the necessity of maintaining food production is equally pressing. The exemption granted to farmers is granted solely because of the conviction that they are, or may be, more useful in food production than as troops at the front.

Such exemptions are really in the nature of licenses, on the condition that the efforts in the direction of food production of a person exempted are such as to justify the granting of the exemption. In the present case the production is not nearly as great as it ought to be. Exemption has been granted until the 1st of June, and an application may be made before the expiration of that period for an extension of the exemption period; but it will be necessary that, before the 1st of May, J. Rodtka shall file with the Registrar, a statement showing the acreage under plow, acreage under crop, and the different kinds of crop; also full particulars as to cattle. The statement must further show to what extent preparations are being made for increasing production during the season of 1918, and on any application for an extension of the exemption period it will be necessary to satisfy the tribunal that he is sparing no effort to see that the production of 1918 shall be adequate, considering the size and nature of the farm.

Exemption granted until 1st June, 1918.

THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917.

REPORTS OF CASES

DECIDED BY

THE CENTRAL APPEAL JUDGE

REPORTER :

J. LORN McDOUGALL, Barrister-at-law.

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MARCH, 19, 1918.

No. 11.

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RE JOHN COMPTON (SERIAL No. 585412 H.C.).

Where a community are farming and fishing in co-operation, temporary exemption may be granted to enable the applicant to show what efforts the community are making to increase production.

*March 5, 1918.*

*The Central Appeal Judge:* This is a case in which a community of individuals, consisting of men, women and children, are working the property in common and operating a fishing plant.

Before the expiration of the period allowed an application may be made for a further exemption, when it will be open to the applicant to show what efforts the community are making to increase production. It will be necessary to give exact particulars as to the acreage under the plow, the acreage under crop, including the hoed crop, together with the kinds of crop, the acreage of pasture and of hay, as well as the number of cattle, stating how many are milch cows, and of horses, sheep and pigs.

Exemption granted until 1st June, 1918.

THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917.

REPORTS OF CASES

DECIDED BY

THE CENTRAL APPEAL JUDGE.

REPORTER:

J. LORN McDOUGALL, Barrister-at-law.

MARCH 19, 1918.

No. 13.

RE J. H. ADAMS (SERIAL NO. 504651 J.C.).

A farmer, one of a family of farmers having other members exempted, required, on applying for extension of exemption period, to show efforts towards increased production on the part of the family. All exemptions liable to be reviewed.

*February 25, 1918.*

*The Central Appeal Judge:* Exemption is granted until the 1st of June. The father, John Adams, and the subject of the application, Harry Adams, must report before the 1st of May giving full particulars as to preparation for the season of 1918, including exact information as to acreage under plough; acreage under crop, specifying the kinds of crops and the number of acres devoted to each; together with full particulars as to cattle, horses, hogs and sheep.

Report must also be made concerning John Henry Adams.

It will be necessary, in order to get an extension of the exemption period hereby granted, that the family shall show they are doing their utmost to increase production in the season 1918. The attention of the family is hereby called to the fact that the exemption granted to John Henry Adams may be reviewed at any time.

Exemption granted until 1st June, 1918.

THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917.

REPORT OF CASES

DECIDED BY

THE CENTRAL APPEAL JUDGE.

REPORTER:

J. LORN McDOUGALL, Barrister-at-law.

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MARCH 22ND, 1918.

No. 15.

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RE JOHN WHITE (SERIAL NO. 790081).

Farm labourer whose exemption is sought by his employer, given temporary exemption. Further exemption made conditional on employer furnishing evidence of preparations undertaken for production for the coming season.

*March 8, 1918.*

*The Central Appeal Judge:* Exemption is granted until the 1st of June provided the subject of the application continues to work as a farm labourer. In the meantime it will be necessary, before the 1st of May, for the proprietor, Mr. John F. White, of Toronto, to file with the Registrar, a written statement showing the acreage under plough, the acreage under crop, and of each kind of crop; the amount of pasture and of hay, and particulars as to cattle and hogs; and on any application for renewal it will be necessary for him to satisfy the tribunal that the production for the season of 1918 is likely to be of such magnitude as to justify the withdrawal of John White from military service.

*Appeal allowed.*

THE MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917.

REPORT OF CASES

DECIDED BY

THE CENTRAL APPEAL JUDGE

REPORTER:

J. LORN McDOUGALL, Barrister-at-Law.

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MARCH 23RD, 1918.

No. 23.

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R. F. ELLIOTT (SERIAL No. 4100197 M.C.)

A claim for Exemption on the ground that applicant is a Minister of the Gospel is not cognisable by the Exemption tribunals. If he is within the class "clergy" under the Act, he is excepted from the operation of the Act, and need not apply for Exemption.

Members of the religious connection commonly known as "Plymouth Brethren" are not, in view of the tenets of that body, entitled to Exemption as conscientious objectors.

Personal belief, apart from membership in an organized religious denomination, does not justify exemption on conscientious grounds.

*March 14, 1918.*

*The Central Appeal Judge:* Exemption is claimed in this case and has been allowed to R. F. Elliott as a Minister of the Gospel in the Plymouth Brethren Church.

The Central Appeal Judge passes no opinion upon the question of whether or not the applicant is a clergyman within the meaning of the language describing the sixth class of persons declared to be excepted from the operation of the Military Service Act.

If the applicant falls within that class then he is entirely outside the operation of the Act, and as regards him the exemption tribunals have no jurisdiction either to grant exemption or to declare his status in relation to the Act; if he is not a clergyman within the language of the Act then the facts presented afford no ground for exemption.

I have been unable to accept the contention made generally on behalf of the connection commonly known as Plymouth Brethren, that they are exempt from combatant military service under the Military Service Act.

Indeed Mr. Elliott, who presented the views of himself and his friends with great clearness as well as with obvious sin-

cerity, did not dispute that the taking part in combatant military service would not, according to the corporate views of the Plymouth Brethren, be regarded as a disqualification for membership; wickedness alone, he said, would be a ground of exclusion and that would not necessarily be regarded as wickedness in all circumstances.

This conclusion necessarily requires me, in accordance with the law, to reject the claims made by members of this connection, for exemption as conscientious objectors.

An additional word in explanation seems necessary. It is no part of the duty of the Central Appeal Judge to discuss the question whether there is or is not any sound, ethical basis for the distinction, which the statute plainly draws, between persons whose religious belief forbids them from engaging in military service, but who, at the same time, are not members of any organized religious denomination holding such belief as part of its corporate creed, and those who, on the other hand, hold nonresistant tenets personally, and are also at the same time members of an organized religious denomination having such a creed.

The condition prescribed by the statute may well be supposed to have had its origin in the desire to avoid or reduce the risk of imposture which the absence of it would probably involve; but, whatever the object of the legislature, the enactment is plain, and the members of the connection in question are not, according to the proper construction of it, within the class entitled to take advantage of it.

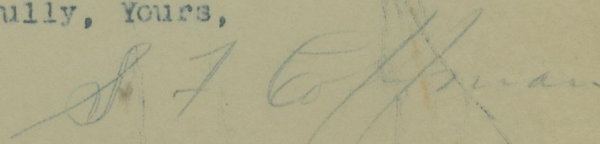
Vineland Ont., Mar. 22, 1918,

The Honorable Mr. N. W. Rowell,  
House of Parliament,  
Ottawa.

Honourable Sir;

A letter from Mr. J. B. Allen, Assistant Secretary, of March 18th, stating that an appointment had been made for the Committee of the Non-Resistant Relief Organization on the 26th of March, was duly received; also a telegram stating that the appointment was changed to March 27th. Our Committee will esteem it an honor to meet with the Committee of the Cabinet, at the time specified, March 27th at eleven-thirty a.m.

Most respectfully, Yours,



Secretary, Non-Resistant Relief Organization.

Vineland Ont , Mar, 22, 1917.

Mr. F. W. Frey,  
Waterloo, Ont.  
Box 402.

Dear Sir, and friend,

Your letter of the 19th Instant received and noted.

I remember of having given Mrs. Wisner a copy of the letter from the Department of Justice, Ottawa and gave her permission to make copies of the same if she required them. I am enclosing you a copy of the same for your use and, since this letter was in reply to an appeal from our Non-resistant Churches, you may use it for the protection of our young men as may be needed. Trusting that we may always receive the same outcries from our Government as have been extended to us in the past, and praying that they may be prospered in every good work, and that we may not cease from doing all the good we possible can in relieving the suffering in the world. I am,

Yours in the service of the Master,

*S. F. Coffman*



Markham, Ont. Mar. 22<sup>nd</sup> 1918

S. F. Coffman

Vincennes, Ont.

Dear brother - Greetings - I talked with the brethren Heise and Gordie this morning and expect to see Bro. Reesor this afternoon or tomorrow. I cannot reach him by phone. There is no dissenting voice to the proposal that the brethren Coffman, Heise and Reesor should compose the Ottawa deputation. Bro. Gusebo who is also a member of the Executive Committee stated in a letter some time ago that he would agree to any action we would take.

The C.P.R. leaves North Toronto at 9<sup>30</sup> P.M. and is due in Ottawa <sup>about same time</sup> as we arrived in Oct. Returning I believe the train runs practically the same time as it did last fall.

Unless Bro. Heise <sup>receives</sup> has other notice he will be ready to depart from North Toronto Tues. 26<sup>th</sup> at 9<sup>30</sup> before time. I will advise Bro. Reesor also. I pray the Lord may make your journey a successful one. Bro. Gordie has some facts re. his son's appeal which he will place in your hands. I think you should pray the Govt. to make the exemptions of our young men consistent with the pledges given to us. I also advise that this deputation draft the circular letter to be issued to the churches regarding the Relief work.

Bro. Gordie has other duties which prevent him from going to Ottawa. I think I can do more lasting good at a double wedding at the deacon's home in Mt. Joy, sometime next week than I could by going to Ottawa. When you reach Loew's Hill or you return stop off and spend Good Friday with us also. Easter if possible. As ever S. F. Coffman

L. J. Burkholder,  
Samuel Goudie,  
D. W. Heize,  
Thos. Reesor,  
Chr. Gascho.

Vineland Ont., Mar. 22, 1918.

Members of Committee to Interview Government,  
Non-Resistant Relief Organization.

Brethren:-

A letter addressed to the Premier was acknowledged as follows;  
"Your letter of the 20th Inst. \February/ advising that the Non-Resistant Relief Organization proposes to raise a charitable fund to be donated to the Government as a memorial in appreciation of the religious liberty enjoyed by non-combatant organizations, is to hand in the absence of the Prime Minister on important public business. Your suggestion that a Committee appointed for that purpose should interview the Government with regard to the work of the Organization will have consideration in due course.

Dated Ottawa, Feb. 28th.

Yours very truly,  
Signed, Geo. W. Yates,  
Prime Minister's Secretary.

S. F. Coffman, Esq.  
Vineland Ont.

A second leer was received yesterday as follows.

Ottawa, March 19, 1918.

Dear Sir,-

In further reference to your letter of the 20th of February, addressed to the Prime Minister, and referred to the Hon. Mr. Rowell, Mr. Rowell asks me to advise you that a Committee of the Cabinet will meet you on Tuesday, the 26th of March, at eleven-thirty a.m., Room 82, East Block, Ottawa. Will you kindly confirm this appointment.

Yours very truly,  
Signed, J. B. Allen,  
Assistant Secretary.

Later in the day a telegram came stating that the appointment had been changed to the 27th of March.

After consulting with Bro. L. J. Burkholder over the phone, I replied as follows.-

To the Honourable Mr. N. W. Rowell.

Honourable Sir,-

A letter from Mr. J. B. Allen, Assistant Secretary, of March 18th, stating that an appointment had been made for the Committee of the Non-Resistant Relief Organization on the 26th of March, was duly received. Also a telegram stating that the appointment was changed to March 27th. Our Committee will esteem it an honor to meet with the Committee of the Cabinet, at the time specified, March 27th at eleven-thirty a.m.

Most respectfully, Yours,

Signed, S. F. Coffman, Sec. Etc.

The matter of arranging for the Committee's meeting was left in the hands of the President of the Committee and Organization, Bro. Burkholder. You have undoubtedly had notice from him.

Yours for the cause,

*S. F. Coffman*  
Secretary of the Committee.

Vineland Ont., Mar, 22, 1918.

Rev. C. M. Good,  
Kitchener, Ont.  
Cameron Street.

Dear Brother:-

Relative to the matter of securing complete/ Exemption for our boys, I make inquiry whetebr the case which you have been carrying through the Appeal Tribunals has had a hearing before the Central Appeal Judge? and what has been the decision, if any? We have not heard from any of the cases that we have appealed. The District Tribunal has refused permission to Appeal to the Central Judge, but has given permission to state the claims, and he would ask the Central Judge if the appeal would be

Allowed. These cases have been stated, but no notice has been returned as to the decision of the Central Judge. Word came to me that the cases of 8 Anish brethren were to have come before the Judge at Ottawa on the 13th Instant. Have not heard particulars since. Yours,

*S. F. Coffey*

F.R.O.

Vineland Ont., Mar, 23, 1919.

L. J. Burkholder,  
Markham, Ont.

Dear Brether :- Greeting.

Your letter of the 22nd Inst. received and noted.

Am glad to hear from you so/ soon, but am sorry that you are not included in the delegation to Ottawa on next Tuesday. There will likely be some very important matters for consideration and should have the attention of the Moderator of our Conference.

You did not state whether or not you made provisions that our Committee be introduced by some representative of the Government. If you have not been able to get in touch with Mr. Welchel, perhaps some of the Markham brethren would be able to get in touch with their representative at Ottawa. In case this is impossible we will have to depend on our meeting with Mr. Allen and arranging with him to direct us to the Committee of the Cabinet. Do you think that we should prepare a special address to this Committee? It occurs to me that it would be in order. I am enclosing a draft of a form of address which I will work over and may revise again if thought advisable. Could you not get Brother Heise and come to Toronto on Tuesday after noon, meeting the train from Vineland which arrives in Toronto 3.58 P.M.? We could then go over some of these matters together and have an understanding about them.

Hoping to see you, and asking a special interest in prayer in behalf of our work and responsibilities, I am,

Yours in faith,

All well except Ella has a spell of sick-headache.

53 Cameron St-  
Kitchener Mar 25/18

Rev S. J. Hoffman  
Simla and Ont.

Dear Bro. in the Lord,

Trust you are keeping well and happy.  
We are all fine and well.  
Your letter to hand Saturday, and contents  
noted.

Well I have not been able to get anything  
satisfactory from the appeal judge on  
the registration at London.

They are reading a decision  
I suppose if the War continues as  
it is going at present, we will soon  
be in it, same as the U.S. is. They  
put them in 5<sup>th</sup> class, but every man is  
supposed to go.

All we can do for the present is to plead  
at the throne of grace.

I expect to get to Simla and within a few  
weeks.

Yours  
C. K. Good