

Vineland Ont., May 11, 1918.

N. M. Bearinger,
Elmira Ont.,

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter received and noted. I regret that I am not in a position to give you any definite information regarding the matter of the exemption of the adherents of the Mennonite Church. That subject has been brought before the Government through our Correspondence a number of times, and also in the presence of the Government by our Committees. But there has been no statement made concerning them. I feel that the law is very explicit on the point of exemptions at the present time. The Tunker brethren who are fully as nonresistant in their principles of faith as ourselves, have no exemption because their names are not mentioned in the Order in Council and not in the Act. The Government has been governed by the letter of the law. Since the purpose of the Act was to grant exemption to those who were members of religious bodies, there seems to be but little hope for the adherents. There is difficulty in getting recognition for even the actual members:

Brother Reesor has called me over the phone and asked concerning this same matter. I told him that I had no information. He stated that he would likely go to Waterloo the first of the week. You will very probably meet him then. For the information of both, I can refer you only to our appeal for the sons of our members who are not of age. We were disenfranchised by the Elections Act, and under that act, the minor ones were exempted from Military service. If that Act is still in force, the Minor ones are yet eligible to exemption. But the exemption of all classes was included in the new Order in Council, and the exemption of these ones having been mentioned in the Act, their exemption may be considered cancelled under the Order. But we should make every effort to secure their exemption since they have been brought up under these distinct principles of faith and it is their honest conviction and should be honored.

Since Brother and yourself have taken up this matter with the Government with one degree of success, I believe that it would be best for you to continue your efforts from the point that you have carried it and through the success which you are in touch and there is every probability that you will have greater success than if it is taken up in some new effort. However, it will be our pleasure to continue with you to bring this matter to a right conclusion. It is sad that any one should be forced to war. But if there is anything that may be done I am ready to co-operate in it. We should pray that we may have peace for ourselves for the sake of the faith of Christ. We should pay for the relief of all others, especially for the ones of whose we have consecrated them to the Lord from their birth.

Will let you know at once of any further word from the Government.

Yours in His cause,

Vineland Ont., May 11, 1918.

Orphan Wismer,
Baden Ont.,

Dear Brother:- Greeting to you and yours in the name of the Blessed Master, Whom we serve and Whose grace is ready for our every need.

Your letters received and noted. I am very sorry that we have a further information to give than that which was sent on the instruction regarding the exemptions that were being granted by the Ontario Registrar at Toronto. A number of the Tunker brethren are being called and have not been recognized on account of their faith. The Government says that they are not exempted. I believe that we owe our present exemption only to the Provisions that were meant for the Russian Brethren, and exemption is granted us on account of the fact that the name Mennonite is found in the Act.

We have written to the Government concerning the standing of those who are Minors, and whose parents have been disenfranchised under the Elections Act. To this question we have received no further instructions. We can give no advice in this matter at present. If there are any of the boys who have been or are members of the Church who have not applied for exemption on conscientious grounds or members of the Church, if they are now members, let them make their claims now as members, and equal exemption will be granted them if the Church can supply them with certificates of membership. If they are conscientiously opposed to combatant service and have no choice other than to comply with the call, this is, if they are not members, but sons of members of our church, let them state their conscientious grounds regarding combatant service and ask for non-combatant service. This is the best they can do. We must wait for further decisions from the Government concerning the sons of Mennonite parents. We can make definite claims only for those who are actual members of the Church, for that is the provision which the law has made for us. Undoubtedly that it makes no difference if these boys have become members since the the Act is in force, they have a right to claim the exemption. We do not encourage or children to enter the Church in order to be exempt from military service. We want them to know that they are saved by their faith in Christ, and to know that they possess that salvation themselves, and have consecrated themselves to the Lord for His service and to live obedient to His Word.

I hope that we may soon know where we stand and that the Government will exercise tolerance toward those who believe in the peace and love of God and Christ to men, and to those who have been brought up under those instructions.

We will send any further instruction to all of our ministers, and will be glad to do so.

Yours in faith,

Bish. J. R. Zook, *Chairman*

Bish. C. N. Hostetter, *Secretary*

Eld. S. G. Engle, *Treas.*

Bish. J. N. Hoover

Eld. J. L. Heisey, *Asst. Sec.*

Eld. J. M. Sheets

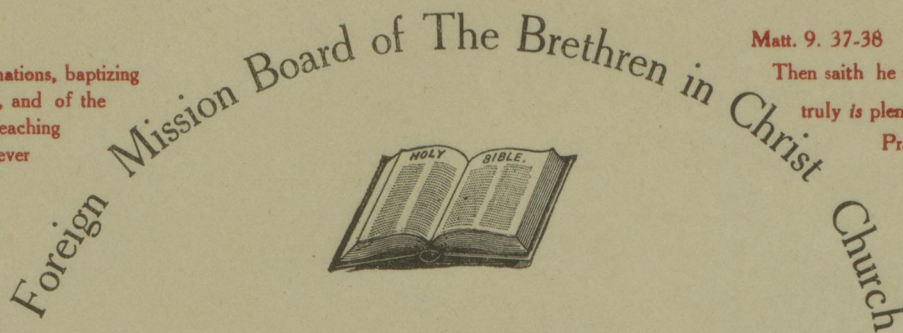
Eld. D. W. Heise

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 always, *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.



Gormley May, 11 th. 1918

S. F. Coffman.

Vineland. Ont.

Most Excelent Brother. greeting, in the name of Him whosais, "I will never leave you, or forsake you".

Just a few words to inform you what we met with on our arrival at Hamilton Baracks. Just before arriving at the Baracks, we were fortunate in meeting Bro G Bearss, from Stevensville who had accompanied a young Bro Winger, who also reported the day previous as required by notice. We learned from him Bro Winger had accepted the two weeks leave, and it at once struck us that if all our young Brethren~~es~~ would take this course, it would at least give further time to bring our matter before head-quarters at Ottawa. We thereupon decided that if this leave could be secured for Bro Swalm, that we would accept it. So with this object I personally got in touch with the proper Officials, but I soon discovered that such a request, under the existing conditions could not be granted even by any of the officers of the Baracks, as Bro Swalm is of course in the Guard House, charged with a military offence for which he will be tried by court marshal. He is not now wearing the Uniform, and of course is not required to go into training. He is bearing up bravely under this trying experience, and gave us the promis that he would stand true to his convictions. His Father and I were both privileged to see him and have a private interview with him, in which we endeavoured to encourage him, and had prayer with him, after which we left him committed to God and the word of His grace.

I beg to advise you that I am in receipt of a reply to our "Wire", Mr Caulder stating that he had taken the matter up immediately with the Minister of Malita

I am also in receipt of your letter copy, which followed the wire yesterday .

I arrived home 10-30 last evening. Bro Swalm also returned to his home. Now we awaiting further developments, and are hoping and praying that this may be of a favorable character. I am inclosing Copy Canadian Statutes extracts.

Yours In Much Love.

D. W. Heise

The Petition of The "TUNKER" Church To The Exemption Boards.

Whereas in the past history of Canada the Church known as "Tunkers" has been placed on record as a nonresistant body of Christians in the Statutes of the then, Government, of Canada and provisions made for their relief by the said Government, \Sec.27, of the statute passed in the 48th year of Geo. III. 1808, and amended by an Act passed in the 50th year of the reign of Geo. III, Chap. XI, and also the present laws in force contained in the Revised Statutes of Canada, Chap. 40./ by commutation or otherwise, and whereas the principles of the said church remain unchanged, We, as loyal, law abiding citizens in every other respect, remembering past privileges and hoping for their continuance, are willing, and will gladly submit to any commutation measure that may be imposed in lieu of, and outside of, direct military service. We also further submit for your consideration the following in explanation of our position. It is authorized by the Executive Board of our General Conference in the United States and Canada to be presented to the "Exemption Boards" by our people.

RESOLVED, That we offer as a Scriptural basis for our Nonresistant doctrine the following passages, "Love your enemies," -Matt.5:44; "Do good to them that hate you,"-Luke 6:27; "Pray for them that despitefully use you," Luke 6:28; "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight,"-John 18:36; "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God,"- II Cor.10:4.

We respect our National Emblem, in accordance with our Faith and Practice; We are subject to the Higher powers, and obey magistrates and uncomplainingly submit ourselves to every good work for the Lord's sake, as long as it is not in violation of the fundamental teachings of Christ, as interpreted by the Tunker Church. We appreciate the degree of immunity we have enjoyed, hitherto, and for the promise of future exemption. Our opposition to war is not founded upon disloyalty to our Government, but upon the conviction that the Gospel of Christ is the Gospel of Peace. We pray for our rulers, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, in all Godliness and honesty.- I Tim.2:2.

Committee appointed by annual Joint Council of Canada, 1917.

Fred Elliot, Richmond Hill, Ont.

Asa Bearss, Ridgeway, Ont.

Committee.

Dunston May 11th '18

True Love

Beloved bro. Coffman:-

I received your letter to-day, that is the copy of the one you sent to Government and think it is good and hope it may accomplish that for which it is sent.

I found Ernest in very good cheer in Hamilton with his own clothes on. God does answer the prayers of His children. He was with a ^{man} ~~bro~~ from ~~at~~ Rainham who was in Kakhi. This bro. was stripped against his wish and the Kakhi put on him.

They only put the coat and cap on Ernest and led him to his Quarters, by that time the Captain sent word again not to put the Uniform on that man. Ernest said then he felt strengthened of the Lord and that prayers were ^{being} answered. He says he has been well used in every way by all those that are over him. He is in the Guard-house awaiting his Court-Martial trial. He had not received your letter when I left him at nearly 3 O'clock. The Officer in charge of them said his letters would be ~~sent~~ censored, and likely

he would get it to-day. I arrived home safely last night and found a lot of the neighbors in, all anxious to hear if Ernest arrived home or how we got along. On my way home I began to reflect a little over my trip and how I seemed to feel so much at home at your place. I felt then, how bold I was to ask you to make a lunch for us but I do hope you will pardon me for the same. Bro Heise had such a headache and that was why I asked I will have to close as Pearl is going to the Office. Wish you both & also children God's richest blessing. Isaac Swalm

Vineland Ont., May 11, 1918.

Anson Groh,
Petrolia, Ont.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter to hand. Glad to hear from you, but I am sorry that you do not expect to be with us at the time of the Conference. The Conference being in our district, I would like very much if it would be possible to have you with us in our home. I am sending you a report of the Conference, & that you will be confirmed in our impression that you are the Chairman of the Peace and Arbitration Committee, and your recollection will remind you that Anson Groh is the Father of that Committee. He should do all that he can to keep it alive and doing all that is possible to fulfill its worth services. Under the great stress of the time, the Conference has taken up the special work of looking after the privileges of exemption which the Government seems to have taken from us, but which we believe will be restored, but there are many other phases of the subject of peace which require that some one keeps in touch with the present day movements. I feel that your sympathies are so fully along the line of the possibilities of this Committee that much good may be done and help afforded that it appeals to you and offers an opportunity of doing something that will mean much for our young people and the Church in the years to come.

You have asked me to be the convener of the Committee. I wish that you would send out the call for the meeting of the Committee, and then, if you find it impossible to be present, I could arrange with the other members to have a meeting. Please arrange to one if you can possibly do so. There are some phases of the work of this Committee that need special looking into. The Boy Scout influence, the movement to introduce military training into the public schools, the extent to which it is now a part of the educational system of the Country, - these are some of the things which would have attention. What might be done to get the assurance of the Government that the Non-resistant principles of our Churches may be preached and practiced in this Country, is also a subject that should have the best thought of every one interested. As a member of that Committee, and a member of the Committee to Ottawa, I think that we ought to have you present and give us the benefit of one of your practical knowledge of the subject. I have been wondering what the Lambton Member has to say or what he thinks of the Subject. Some time ago I noticed that the Farmers of that section had a special meeting concerning the drafting of the farm help for army service. I have been wondering what the sentiment was. Could you give us an idea what be done thru the influence of Members of Parliament other than the few with whom one of us have come in contact? If you cannot bring us your message in person, let us have it in the next best way. But we want you, if possible.

Will forward copies of more correspondence in a few days. The Tunkers are making a desperate effort for recognition which has not thus far been accorded them.

Yours in faith,

Waterloo Ont. May 13/18

S. G. Coffman
Vineland, Ont.

Dear Brother;

There is some difference of opinion about that letter which you sent to St. Jacobs in regards of exemption from military service about the class which has to register before long. Some say Church Members need not register others say we must. Please let me know if we have to register? If we do not register is there any danger that military police take us for defaulters? Or will our certificate of Church Memberships make us safe?

Sincerely Yours

Jesse B. Martin
Waterloo

Ont
E. R. R. no. 1.
% Daniel ~~H~~ Martin

Gormley May 14th 1918

Dear Bro.

Just a few words.
I am on my way now to
our conference at New-
Paris Ind. Bro J. Elliott
will fill my place until I
return and look after our
peoples Interest. Any devel-
opments of interest or impor-
tance. Correspond with him,
I will keep myself open, so
in case of necessity I can
be reached by wire and
return at once. Had
hoped to receive intelligence
from Ottawa today, but now,
May the Good Lord still understand
is our prayer. Yours
T. W. W.

Pickering, May 14 1915

ONTARIO, CANADA

Rev J S Coffman
Wineland

Greeting
I ~~can~~ spoke with you regarding adherents to Mennonites I was to Kitchener saw Weichel and Scott they are taking the matter up at Ottawa tomorrow if they require our presence they will wire, if we go to Ottawa possibly other matters will be brought up, would it not be advisable for you to go if we get wire.

I find that your brethren in Waterloo have some boy adherents same as we have, if it would not be advisable or possible to use membership certificates could we not get Non combatant service for them Our boys were threatened to be sent to France under Military Guard we have 2 in uniform and several more who must report next week

Pickering, 191

ONTARIO, CANADA

they wish to be baptised before
they go
If I get wire to go to Ottawa
I will phone you

May God guide us through
this great trial

yours truly

Thomas Reesor

S. F. Coffman

Guernsey Isk May 15 - 18

Dear Bro. Greeting ⁱⁿ His Name.

Your letter to hand. were again glad to hear from you and also what is being done regards the expungations.

Our people are anxious to know what ~~is~~ the decision is regards the minor sons as we have a few in the district as Mennonite sons, but not members.

Will it be compulsory for our sisters to register on that date appointed by the authorities. Or can they also claim the exception. Will all persons be required to register. Regardless of faith. or such as have already received exemptions. These are a few of the questions that are in the mind of our members. I may have omitted some of the most important. We have a number of members also non members from Ontario, will they be able to report up here, or must it be in the east?

2,

The weather is still quite cool, a little frost & some snow showers, but it is turning some warmer today with a nice rain. wheat seeding is completed, also is mostly to sow yet. Quite a few new settlers are coming in this district. The vacant land is being bought up and improved.

There is some prospect of Bro. N. A. Lind & family to come into our district on a prospecting trip. I will indeed enjoy a visit like this, being alone for five years. This leaves us all in usual good health, hoping you are enjoying the richest of Gods blessing.

In love from ^{brother} your own
the faith. J. S. Rosenberger

Box 18 Quernsey

Sask

P.S. Has the Ontario Conference taken steps in showing their gratitude to the government for the exemption ~~privilege~~ privilege. This question was discussed with us. but was turned down.

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH

OFFICE OF ONTARIO REGISTRAR

UNDER MILITARY SERVICE ACT

1

BOARD OF TRADE BUILDING

TORONTO,
ONTARIO May 15th.1918

L. J. Burkholder, Esq.,
Acting Bishop,
Mennonite Church,
MARKHAM, Ont.

Dear Sir:-

We frequently receive certificates of membership on behalf of members of the Mennonite Church. These certificates should show the length of time the men concerned have belonged to your Church.

I do not know to whom I should address this request and would be glad, therefore, if you would communicate in this matter with the central authority of the Mennonite Church so that all certificates filed with the Registrar may contain this information.

Yours truly,

Charles Wilson

MFC*EL

ONTARIO REGISTRAR

IF YOU HAVE OCCASION TO REPLY PLEASE QUOTE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

NAME

SERIAL No.

DECISION

LOCAL TRIB.

APPEAL TRIB.

CATEGORY

Rockton, Ont.,
May 15th 1918.

Rev. S. F. Gaffman
Wineland, Ont.

Dear Bro. Greeting:

I'm the young man
who had the talk with
you in early Feb. at Rev.
David Wismer's, My Uncle,
in Kitchener, relative to
Mennonites, and securing
exemption from London.
I recd word from London
that a recent ruling of
the Minister of Justice is
to the effect that Mennon-
ites have no duty to
perform under the act,
and that therefore I do not
need to worry further

(2)

about the matter, and have taken it for granted that this latest order in Council did not affect us as Mennonites.

I intended to drop you a line sooner letting you know how I got through with it.

I would like to know if the new registration of boys 19 affects Mennonites. I do not think it does, but thought you are in touch with head quarters and will know.

Am enjoying myself in the Lord's service

(3)

which beyond doubt finds
you the same.

Trusting the Lord
will bless you richly for
the interest you have
taken in the matter,
I remain

Your Bro. in Christ

W. G. Wismer

~~Truel~~

Rockton Ont

100 George St. Hamilton

May 13th 1918

Rev Fred Hauffman
Vineland.

Dear Brother: -

Greeting in Jesus
name. On arriving
home last Friday. Wife
told me of your phone
message. The following
day 11th I went down
to Scott St Barracks
and had about five
minutes with Ernest
Swalm. He is a prisoner
in detention house, tried
and found guilty of deserting
etc. and awaiting his
Court martial - Major
Stanley who is over his
Battalion has little

sympathy ² with what he
 calls conscientious objectors
 and thinks they ought to
 be sent to the firing line,
 at once. If all he said
 comes true, it is going
 to go pretty hard for
 Ernest, and I doubt if I
 could get to see him again
 as I was informed. he was
 not in a hotel to receive
 guests but a prisoner etc.
 Ernest seemed bright &
 cheerful and had 6 or 8 other
 men in with him. I left him
 some tracts, and he said he
 had his Bible. He was
 expecting a sentence of 2 years.
 An officer stood by my side
 as I talked with him, and
 my time was short. He
 expressed his appreciation
 for my call -

I have since heard of
 three Plainmorth Brothers
 being in the same attitude

down there. Kenneth son
of Edmund Moyer is now
in uniform. After ~~refusing~~
refusing on two occasions
his arguments were taken
and forced to don the
Saborius suit.

In Conclusion I would
think definite steps ought
to be taken for Ernest at
once. No doubt you have
I will be pleased to
hear of your success. God
save us in these awful
days.

Yours very sincerely
T. Ford Barber

I would draw your attention
to tonight's "Spectator"



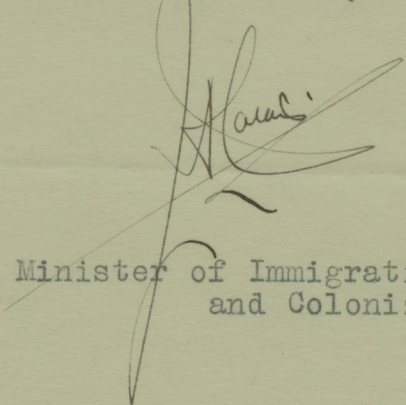
OFFICE OF
THE MINISTER OF IMMIGRATION
AND COLONIZATION

Ottawa, Ontario,
15th May, 1918.

Dear Sir,

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, in further reference to the relief of people of your faith from military service both combatant and non-combatant. I note that you have written Hon. Mr. Rowell, President of the Privy Council, in reference to the same matter, and I am sure he will bring this question to the attention of Council in order that it may be dealt with finally at an early date. I am transmitting to him your letter to me in order that he may place it before Council as well. In due course you may expect to hear from Mr. Rowell in reference to the matter.

Yours very truly,



Minister of Immigration
and Colonization.

Rev. S. F. Coffman,
Vineland,
Ontario.

Markham, Ont - May 16th 1818

S. F. Coffman

Vineland, Ont.

Dear brother - Greetings. Bro. Tho. Reesa called Monday eve. He is interested in several young men who are adherents but not members in their church. Carl Reesa, Flavis' son, and Simeon, Isaacs' son, are in uniform - and at least three others are in similar circumstances have orders to report for duty in the course of a week or more. Carl and Simeon are at home on two weeks leave of absence. Thomas met Mr. Weichel and Mr. Scott, M. P. last Sunday and made a plea for adherents of the Mennonite Church. Mr. Weichel offered to accompany Mr. Scott to Ottawa on Monday and they would take up the matter and do what they could. They thought it would not be necessary for representatives of the Church to be further interviewed but if any one was needed they would write to Bro. Reesa. He asked me to write you and if any one was called to Ottawa perhaps you would care to go since he has found that we also have some men of draft age, who are not in the Church. You no doubt have a letter from Bro. Reesa covering this same matter.

While I think we should do what we can for such ~~and~~ are outside the Church yet it is urged that plea might endanger the position of the Church on

the exemption. If the Govt. ^{2.} grants the non-Resistant Churches complete exemption we should thank the Lord for such favor and "leave well enough alone".

Bro. Thos. also told me that two of their young men who have notices to report have asked to be baptized and received into the church before they have to go. I do not know what they will do when it comes to baptizing a man in a soldier's uniform.

Bro. David Heise left for Indiana on Tuesday. He is attending conference. I have just now talked with his wife and they have had no word about the Sewalme case in Hamilton. Have you any word about it? They are anxious about it. Bro. Fred. Elliot will act in their behalf, if necessary, during Bro. Heise's absence. May this find you well as it leaves us.

Fraternally

L. J. Burkholder



AND ALL things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Matt. 21: 22.

For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Matt. 7: 8.

Ridgeway 5, 17, 18

Bro Coffman Greeting

I had to go to Houghton Mission last Friday, but Sirvin went with the Boy called to report at Hamilton at military quarters. They seem to have no knowledge of our position as nonresistant objectors, and some of the officials acted very nasty towards the boy as though they had no instructions how to deal with our people from Ottawa — He asked leave of absence for couple weeks and was granted. He objected to putting on the uniform, The head official there was very reasonable, and told him to write him from home not too soon, nor too late so he (the official) could answer him — If any others are called would it be wise to write to where the call came for to report ^{for service} stating our position and claims as conscience objectors, or how shall we proceed

Please give us all the information you can and your prayers while in this awkward position. quick

Thanking you for past favours

As Ever Asa Bearss

Vineland Ont., May 17, 1918.

Jesse B. Martin,
Waterloo, Ont. R.R. #1.

J. Daniel E. Martin
Dear Brother:- Greeting!

Your letter to hand and noted.

Concerning the exemption of our Brethren, I may say that all are completely exempted. They are considered as not under the Act or the Order in Council. They have no duty to perform. The Registrars have no right to call any of them. Those who had applied for exemption and have received partial or other exemptions, may consider that their obligations are now all cancelled and they are free. None of our brethren need respond to the call for young men of nineteen to register. Our brethren are not called at all under this order. The registration for labor of all men and women from 16 to 60 will apply to every one. It is not an army order, it is a order of the Government for a labor census, and all should register, but the time for this does not come until, in June.

Let us not be unthankful to God for our privileges. Be true to the faith and love of Christ our Saviour.

Yours in Him,

A. Hoffman

Vineland Ont., My 17, 1918.

W. G. Wismer,
Rockton Ont.,
Dear Brother:-

Your letter received. Am glad that you had no further trouble regarding your exemption, and glad that our brethren are not required to respond for military service, but are considered outside of the Act.

With reference to the registration of those who are nineteen years of age for military service, the Mennonites are not under any of the present laws enacted for the recruiting of reinforcements for the army.

At the time that all citizens are required to register for the labor census, our people will register as well as others. But we would register in such a manner that the Government will know that we are not eligible for any service in connection with direct army work or of any military nature. We should either find a place to subscribe our religion or indicate it along with the signing of the name.

Yours in faith,



Vineland Ont., May, 17, 1918.

T. Ford Barker,
100 George St.,
Hamilton.

Dear Brother Barker:- Greeting in the Masters name.

Your letter relative to your visit to Brother Swalm was received upon my return home from a visit among the Amish Brethren at Tavistock. We were glad to inform them that all indications point to the Registrars having received instructions from Headquarters that Mennonites are not under the Act and Orders in Council and have no duty to perform. Some have been called, but, upon presenting their credentials that they are Mennonites they are exempted entirely.

The case of Brother Swalm is different. The Tunker Brethren have not been fortunate in having their name mentioned in connection with the Act. It is very clear that the Government has been guided by the letter of the Act, and not by the spirit of it. The case of Brother was immediately telegraphed to Ottawa, and a letter followed at once explaining the details of the case and making a special statement of and plea for the case of the Tunker Brethren. We had stated their case previously and had made a plea for them, but it seemed not to have been definite enough. In the last letter it was stated as clearly as possible, and mentioned in special notes to the Prime Minister and to the President of the Privy Council, also to the Hon. J.A. Calder who has charge of our matters with the Government. I think that all of these matters with reference to Bro. Swalm and the Tunker Church have been turned over to the Hon. Mr. Rowell. The case of the imprisonment of Bro. Swalm was at once taken up with the Minister of Militia. I think that it will have immediate attention.

There should be no fear that, in case he is sentenced, there will follow a reprieve. But, I cannot consider that the matter will be allowed to go as far as Courtmartial proceedings against him.

I think there are others of the Tunker Brethren in Hamilton. It is too bad about the case of Kenneth Moyer. Kenneth Stuart is in the same case. O, what an oppressor is the god of war! May the day soon come when the Lord will smite and bow men how to rule without the necessity of world revolutions when "Nations will learn war no more."

Thanking you for your interest in this special case, I am,

Yours in faith



Vineland Ont., May, 17, 1918.

Thomas Reesor,
Pickering Ont.,

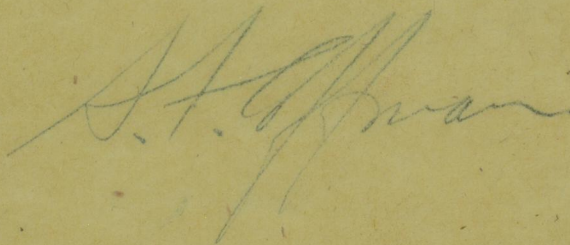
Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter received. I was with the Anish Brethren at Tavistock on Wednesday evening. They wanted some explanations about the position in which we are now, since our appeals to the Government seem to have been acknowledged as far as the members of the Mennonite Church are concerned. A couple of their brethren had been called and did not know what to do. We told them that they should send notice to London that they are Mennonites or Anish Mennonites and that they would then be exempted. This seems to be the order for London as well as Toronto. I received notice that at least one Mennonite Brother had been accorded exemption by the Registrar at London.

I was glad to learn that you received some encouragement concerning the adherent of the Mennonite Church while you were at Kitchener and Waterloo. It is too bad that these young men who have been brought up to believe thus are obliged to deny their faith and principles by force. I hope that some arrangement may be made for them so that they will be allowed their liberty. It may bring many of them to think more seriously of what is their duty to God, and they would be encouraged to thus confess their faith in Him and stand for the principles that are planted in their hearts from childhood. Anything that I may do to help in this cause will be cheerfully given. Our Conference is at hand week after next. If it will be necessary to go to Ottawa at any time I will try and comply with the necessity. Let us continue to pray for the good of the land and of the world.

The case of the Tucker Brethren is receiving the attention of the Government at present. A letter from Hon. Mr. Calder says that the matters have been referred to Hon. N.W. Rowell, who will place them before the Council.

Yours in faith,



Vineland Ont., May 17, 18.

Isaac Swain,
Duntroon, Ont.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter received. I am glad to hear that your son has been so steadfast in the faith and trust that he will continue thus through this experience. Brother Barker wrote me that he had a visit with Ernest and found him cheerful; that was on the Friday following your visit to him.

Brother Heise has likely written you concerning the wire that he had from Ottawa stating that the case had been brought to the attention of the Minister of Militia at once. I have not since heard from him. Yesterday, upon arriving at home I received a letter from the Hon. Mr. Calder stating that the questions brought before him had been turned over to the Hon. Mr. Rowell, and that they would have immediate attention. I believe that any steps that may be taken to prosecute Ernest will be stopped, and that the actual conscientious objectors, or the members of those Churches whose creed forbids all military service will have consideration. In case Ernest has his trial and should be sentenced, it will be possible to get a reprieve if the Government will stand behind its pledges of religious liberty. We have the pledge of a number of men that our cause is a just one and their sympathies are with us and we believe moreover that the Lord will save us from these times of trial.

We have a number of assurances that our Mennonite boys have their exemption. Some cases that came before the Registrar at London have been instructed that Mennonites are not under the Military Service Act and Orders in Council, and that same is true of Toronto. If our plea will hold good for the Mennonites, I am sure that the Tanker Brethren will receive equal consideration and favors. May the Lord grant these earnest petition.

May His mercies who loved us and gave His life for us, continue to ~~send~~ freely give us all things. May He sustain you and your loved ones in these trying experiences.

Yours in faith,

S. F. Coffman



House of Commons

OTTAWA

May 17th, 1918.

Rev. S. F. Coffman,
Vineland, Ont.

Dear Mr. Coffman:

Mr. Weichel and myself have been endeavouring yesterday and today to have matters arranged so that your people will be exempted from the operations of the Order in Council recently passed, calling to the colors the young men from 19 to 23. In this, we think, that we have been successful. We had an interview yesterday with the Militia Council. The Minister of Militia was present and after discussing the whole situation thoroughly, it was arranged that we should secure from your Church the names of Bishops or someone in authority who could issue certificates of membership in your Church. The Officer Commanding the Military District will then be authorized to accept these certificates and allow the men off on leave.

Kindly therefore forward to me as quickly as possible the names of those to whom the Government could refer.

It does not appear desirable, at the present time, to have this information made public. We do not want it to get into the papers. We endeavored further to have this apply to the adherents of the members of your church, but up to the present time we have not been able to arrange this and I must confess that it seems doubtful at the present moment that we will be able to do so.. If the Government were to do this, it would be extending to those called out under the recent Order in Council privileges beyond that contained in the original Military Service Act, as the Military Service Act granted exemption only to those who were members, in good standing of your Church.



House of Commons

OTTAWA

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We have pointed out that the young men of your faith do not enter the Church at an early age, as a rule not until they have married. The answer is that to open the question of adherents at all, would lay the door open to fraud.

We will keep you informed if there is any further change in the situation. Mr. Weichel returns home tonight and will immediately get in touch with your people in his own district.

Yours very sincerely,

FSS/MHS.

F. S. Scott

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

MILVERTON, ONT. May 18 1918

J. F. Coffman
 Vineland, Ont.

Dear Brother to an extent of our Faith:

Well my Son and I were at Stratford again Yesterday about trying to get naturalization papers. We had before been there for that reason, perhaps 1 or 2 month ago, but then The Crown Atty. was away to Toronto. So then the first time we were only with the Judge who spoke encouragingly to us. And after asking to be naturalized, he asked if we wanted to be naturalized as Amish Mennonites, and of course I said yes, and thought this was possible. So then the Judge said we must see the Crown Atty about it, and that then it would again eventually come before him again. So then Yesterday we were to see The Crown Atty. about it, and he said we would have to be naturalized just the same as any other person except that we would affirm to the oath instead of Swearing. Otherwise it could not be made different. I will here on other side of this sheet give you a copy of the form of oath which they would want from us which I think makes no provisions for as for

Amish Mennonites or Faith of any kind.

Copy of form of Oath of allegiance.

I, _____ of the Township
 of Mornington, in the County of Perth, Machinist
 do solemnly affirm by Almighty God that I will
 be faithful and bear true allegiance to His
 Majesty George the Fifth, his heirs and
 successors according to law, so help me God

We asked him if we could not make
 it a little different so it would not interfere
 so much with our faith, but he said no
 this was the only form or way it could be
 done. and that if we could not make
 this affirmation, that we could not become
 Canadian citizens and would have to remain
 subjects to U.S. Now I thought and am
 under the impression that there would be a
 possibility of getting some other form of affirmation,
 or ~~the~~ provisions in our case, but I do not
 know who to go to to get it, or how to go
 about it. We then later in the day went
 to the court house and intended again to ask
 the judge about it but could not find him
 then. Now I beg you to consider our
 situation and kindly give it your prayerful

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

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MILVERTON, ONT.,

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thoughts. I am sorry to trouble you, but you kindly let me know how much I will owe you for this, and I will gladly send you remittance for same.

Let us know what you think we should do about it.

Well now about the registering of you the of 19 years:— I read the proclamation yesterday in a paper. And as near as I understand you or any of the laws about the matter, I also think as you said the other evening, that it is best for all Mennonites not to Register. Of course this may drive the matter to some test cases. So now as no one else of our congregations here have heard you say this I wish you would kindly send me a letter with this matter about registering in writing so I could show it to any or all of our Brethren any time necessary. Some of our Brethren may feel afraid not to register so if in this way you help me to show ^{persuade} them that you think it best also not to register, this would be good. I hope you can understand my poor dictating.

I saw an item in the London Advertiser

where there are questions and answers about militaryism, or proclamation about the 19 year old draft.

A man down near Walkerville & some where I think:— asked and said, he is 20 years old and is ordained a minister, whether he would have to register or not; and a few more questions. The part of the ans, that I remember says:— That the Ministers are out of the act and therefore need not register. This confirmed ~~at~~ our idea of not registering all the more. because as you say we claim ^{we} are not in the act. I enjoyed the Meeting the other evening in several ways, I like to be where tears flow to a certain extent, not that I ~~enjoy~~ rejoice over other peoples sorrows but to see people weep over their sins, or for the love and compassion towards each other, and I like to weep with the sorrowing, and still better if I can weep feeling the love of Christ with my many sins forgiven.

Please ans as soon as you conveniently can. Remember us in your earnest prayers as I hope to do for all needful, in my weakness.

Respectfully Yours,
J. R. Gersol.

Tofield Alta
May 19-18

S. F. Coffman.

Dear Bro: Greeting.

We are sure glad to hear that the Mennonites
are exempted. May we be ever true to our Lord and
master in all our life.

Would like to ask you wheather we are to
regeater on the next registering day when all are
supposed to reglater from age of 16 to 60
or wheather we are to with hold

Please answer when you know how

Your humble bro in Christ

J. F. Lehman

C. LESSLIE WILSON,
ONTARIO REGISTRAR

A. F. BARR,
H. E. MACHELL,
ASSISTANT REGISTRARS

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH

OFFICE OF ONTARIO REGISTRAR

UNDER MILITARY SERVICE ACT

BOARD OF TRADE BUILDING

TORONTO,
ONTARIO

May 20th, 1918.

S. Fred Coffman, Esq.,
Vineland, Ontario.

Dear Sir:

I understand you are in charge of the Mennonite Church at Vineland, Ontario, and I should be obliged if you will kindly furnish me with a list of the male members of your congregation aged 18 to 34 years inclusive. Envelope for your reply is enclosed.

Yours truly,

Charles Wilson

ONTARIO REGISTRAR.

Per: *A. F. Barr*

Assistant Registrar.

AFB:E

To Committee of Mennonite and Amish and
Committee of N-R. R. Organization.

Vineland Ont., May 20, 1918.

Brethren:- Greeting.

Please note the following copy of a letter received from the Hon. F. S. Scott, M.P. This was written after Mr. Weichel and Mr. Scott had been interviewed regarding the securing of exemptions for adherents of our Churches. Mr. Weichel agreed to accompany Mr. Scott to Ottawa for the purpose of interviewing the Government concerning these questions.

Ottawa, May 17th 1918,

Rev. S. F. Coffman,
Vineland Ont.,

Dear Mr. Coffman:

Mr Weichel and myself have been endeavoring yesterday and today to have matters arranged so that your people will be exempted from the operations of the Order in Council recently passed, calling to the colors the young men from 19-28. In this, we think, we have been successful. We had an interview yesterday with the Militia Council. The Minister of Militia was present and after discussing the whole situation thoroughly, it was arranged that we should secure the names of Bishops or someone in authority who could issue certificates of membership in your Church. The Officer Commanding the Military District will then be authorized to accept these certificates and allow the men off on leave.

"Kindly therefore forward to me as quickly as possible the names of those to who the Government could refer."

It does not appear desirable, at the present time, to have this information made public. We do not want it to get into the papers. We endeavored further to have this apply to the adherents of the members of your Church, but up to the present time we have not been able to arrange this, and I must confess that it seems doubtful at the present moment that we will be able to do so. If the Government were to do this, it would be extending privileges beyond that contained in the original Military Service Act, as the Military Service Act granted exemption only to those who were members, in good standing of your Church."

"We have pointed out that the young men of your faith do not enter the Church at an early age, as a rule not until they have married. The answer is that to open the question of adherents at all, would lay the door open to fraud."

"We will keep you informed if there is any further change in the situation. Mr. Weichel returns home tonight and will immediately get in touch with your people in his own district."

Yours very sincerely,

Signed, F. S. Scott.

FSS/WNS.

The following is my reply to the letter of Mr. Scott.

Vineland Ont. May 20th 1918.

Hon. F. S. Scott, M. P.
House of Commons,
Ottawa Ont.

Dear Sir:-

Your favor of the 11th May, received and noted with pleasure. We wish to thank you for the interest you have taken on behalf of our people and for the successful arrangement with the Government regarding the exemption of members of our Churches from the recent Order in Council calling

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