

Copy

Selkirk Ont., July 20th, 1918.

Mr. C. Lesslie Wilson,
Ontario Registrar,
Toronto Ont.

Dear Sir:-

Re Leonard A. Armstrong.

This young man registered under the conditions of the Order in Council, on the first day of June, last, at Cayuga Ont., and the number of his registration form has been sent you in my previous letter. His age is 19 years.

Mr. Armstrong did not register under the previous conditions of the M.S.A. and therefore he could not apply for the usual exemptions, and has not been assigned the registration number given under the M.S.A. and since he has not been assigned for service he holds no service number. *He has not, as yet, applied for exemption.*

In a number of instances the ministers of some of our Mennonite congregations have been asked by your department to send in the names of members who are of military age, or who are between the ages of 19 and 34. Those who were asked to do have responded. Since Mr. Hoover is a member of the Church this information was sent you after his registration in keeping with the request of your Department, and this may be the cause of the misunderstanding regarding his case.

Yours truly,
(Signed) Moses Hoover.

COPY OF LETTER TO BROTHER HOOVER.
Toronto, July 16th, 1918.

Rev. Moses Hoover,
R. R. #2
Selkirk Ont.

Dear Sir:-

Re Leonard A. Hoover.

I wrote you on the 15th of June last and again on the 2nd of July asking whether or not the above man filed claim for Exemption or Report for Service and if so the Serial number thereof.

Please be good enough to reply in this matter by return mail.

Yours truly,
(Signed) C. Lesslie Wilson,
Ontario Registrar.

MFC-EL

Marathon July 30th 1918

C. Leslie Wilson - Ontario Registrar M. S. C.

Toronto Ont.

Dear Sir: Yours of the 5th inst. per U. R. brought re: registration of Mennonites, Trinitarians, etc. to hand. The following sentence as found in the letter: "Therefore all members and adherents of the Church born since 1882, and now 19 years of age, and in the future as they become 19 years of age, must register under the Act."

I do not know of any proclamation calling men of 35 years to register. Kindly give reference.

According to your letter I should understand that married men also must register. Is that the law at the present time?

I shall await your reply that we may comply with instructions.

Yours truly,

L. J. Burkholder - Acting Bishop.

Cyril Baer

Petersburg July 22/18
RR#2

Dear Bro. in Christ -

A few lines in regard with the military question. I received a letter from W. E. Wismer about two weeks ago, a copy of which you will find enclosed. Last fall I appealed for exemption on two grounds (1) Mennonite (2) as a farmer, (being advised to do so) I received a hearing at New Hamburg and was "allowed from combatant service on account of religious belief." I appealed again, and my case was dismissed at Hitchenes. Next time I sent my appeal down to the Central Appeal Judge

(at bottom of sheet).

Note. If the decision was that claim for exemption should be disallowed or allowed only for a time which has expired or under circumstances which no longer exist, the man concerned must comply with such order as he has already received or as may be sent to him by the Registrar herewith or here after.

M. S. A. 47.

COPY. A.

MILITARY SERVICE ACT, 1917.

Notice of Disposition of appeal to
Central Appeal Judge.

Serial Number
740795 AC.

Consecutive No.
on Schedule,
460 A.

Name, Mr. Ezra Baer.
Street and No., R R #2
City or Town, Petersburg Ont.

You are notified that the Appeal to the
Central Appeal Judge with respect to the exempt-
ion from Military Service of yourself has been
considered by the Central Appeal Judge
and his decision was that exemption be---

"Allowed from combatant service and
until November 1st, 1918, as a farmer."

(Signed) W. E. Wismer,
Registrar Under Military
Service Act, 1917.
At London Ont.

Note. If the decision was that Claim for
Exemption be disallowed, or allowed only for a time
which has expired, or under circumstances
which no longer exist, the man concerned must
comply with such orders as he has already
received or as may be sent to him by the
Registrar herewith or hereafter.

PP#2 Pickering July 22 1918

Bro S J Coffman
Wineland

Dear Brother

Greeting in the name
of our redeemer
Your favor of 19th received
and noted. Re the extra session
of parliament which bro Wise referred
to I suppose will not materialize
on account of Majority decision of
supreme Court judges. so I supp-
ose we must exert our efforts on
same lines as formerly.

Possibly you could correspond with
members of Committee regarding
printing of statute I am entirely
in favor of the suggestion I think
every Mr who takes an interest
in our behalf should have one
Mr Scott could distribute them
as he saw fit; he could possibly
strengthen his case thereby
Norman Hoover got exemption until
November, which I fully expected
Yours very truly
Geo Peacor

Vineland Ont., July 23, 1918.

Ezra Baer,
Petersburg Ont. R.R. #2.,

Dear Brother, -Greeting.

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

The copy of the Notice which you received from the Registrar from London was a matter of interest to me. It is the first of the kind that I have received, and corresponds, however with the decisions that have been given by the Central Appeal Judge on other cases of Appeals by our Brethren. But this is the first case in which a time limit was set for Exemption, and that on the grounds of your being a farmer. Another case has just come before the Exemption Tribunal in Toronto, of an appeal by a brother in the Markham District, who is an Adherent, of the Reesor Church. He has also been granted exemption until November. There will then likely be a call for a number of our brethren who are allowed at home now on account of their being farmers. But the fact that they will then be called does not prohibit their responding when called, and presenting their certificates as members of the Mennonite Church and securing their Leave of Absence the same as others who have been called on account of their exemptions having been cancelled under the Order in Council.

There is no reason as yet why any of our brethren need to be alarmed by the decisions of the Central Appeal Judge. The fact is, that the arrangement which is now in operation is such on account of that decision. It is not possible for the Military Authorities to grant us Exemption under the Military Service Act, since that Act has been explained as granting exemption to Ontario Mennonites, only from Combat service. But we have explained that our brethren cannot do any military service, and the persons who have taken this matter up for us, have arranged with the Military Service Council to have our brethren allowed a Leave of Absence, when they are called, and this Leave grants them the Privilege of remaining away from military service until they are called and under the arrangements they will not be called, but will be required to report by letter four times in a year, stating their place of residence and their occupation. This arrangement is equivalent to a complete exemption.

There may be other conditions instituted at a latter date by the Government, but there is no intimation at the present time that there will be any service required of our brethren. In the west they have complete exemption granted them and their Church Certificates are the only evidence required to secure their exemption. On account of the fact that our brethren in the West and the Russian Mennonites are totally exempted we have confidence that there will be no forcible methods employed to oblige our brethren to enter the army service. May the Lord avail for us in the future as he has in the past, and may we be watchful and prayerful while we also prove faithful to our trust as His servants.

Yours in faith,

Vineland Ont., July 23rd, 1918.

JR. Ebersole,
Milverton Ont.

Dear Brother:- A friendly Greeting in the name of the Lord.

Your letter of the 19th Instant with the enclosed Money Order for the amount of \$10.00 was duly received and I herewith express to you my heartfelt thanks for the interest taken in our behalf during these days in which we have endeavored to labor for the Master in behalf of those whom He loves and has saved by His own blood and set free from the carnal will which has previously led us in the ways of the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof, and wars and fightings come from the lusts of the flesh.

We wish to thank all of those who have been instrumental in helping on in this work and we know that the gifts of the brethren and sisters have enabled us to give time and attention to this work in a way that we could not otherwise have done. And we feel that the Lord will richly reward them for their helpfulness, and bless them with many spiritual blessings, for those blessings are worth more by far than those of a temporal nature. We need both the natural blessings and the spiritual ones. Paul says that the things which are seen are temporal and the things which are unseen are eternal. We pray the Lord to bless you and the brotherhood with the eternal blessings, because you have them most on your hearts and your prayers and your labors have been to make it possible for you and for us all to enjoy the blessings of the Spirit in peace and love and good will to all men.

Brother Jantxi wrote me on the 2nd of July and enclosed an order for \$16.40, which we acknowledged and wrote the brotherhood a letter of thanks for their kindness. We feel that we have been well repaid for our labors in the gratitude of the hearts of those who have been helped in securing their freedom from military service, and the joy that is in the hearts of many parents because their sons have been free to service the Lord and spared to them in the home and church. It is a source of joy to know that the Government has been faithful to the promises given to our forefathers in their coming to this Land, and we should pray that the Lord will in some way reward them for their sincerity in granting this religious liberty to His children. The remuneration for the time and labor spent is sufficient. We could not ask more, and we would desire that you do not feel under any further obligations to us for what we have done, except to continue in love and prayer for us.

I am sorry that I overlooked sending you one of the last letters. Your name is on the list, and was overlooked by mistake. I am enclosing a copy for you. Also find enclosed copies of the certificates used by our brethren and by the Russian brethren in the west. There is also a copy of the report that was made to the Government from the blanks that were filled out by our brethren who had claimed exemption. The report was compiled from all the reports sent in. There were no names or places or numbers given. But you will notice how differently the applications were treated when all claimed exemption as members of the non-resistant churches. This report was sent in in June.

There have been no new developments. We feel that we should ever be on our guard and it may be that when the members of the Government return from England that some steps may be taken that will require further effort on our part. Let us watch and pray. Will be glad to learn of any matters affecting our people that may come under your notice.

Yours in faith.

Vineland Ont., July 23, 1918.

Thomas Reesor, Treas.
Pickering Ont.

Dear Brother in faith:- Greeting.

Your letter of the 22nd Inst. with the enclosure for the amount of the statement sent you was duly received. I had not intended you to send a Cheque for thre amount, (\$13.75) but would rather that you had given credit for tha amount to Vineland, so that your books should balance. You understand why I had prefered to do this, on account of the contributions that have come in to help to defray the expenses of my work. Perhaps this can be made right in some other way.

There are still some inquiries coming in from different persons regarding the conditions of exemption. A letter from Petersburg from a brother states that the Central Appeal Judge has given a decision in his case that he is exempt from combatant service and while farmin g until the 1st of November. This means that the will be called upon for combatant service by the Registrar or the Commanding Officer at London on the 1st of November. That is the same time that Norman Reesor is given. It is likely that a good many of the farmer boys will be called on ar about that date. I have written the brother that when he is called he will be required to report and then will only need to present his Church Certificate and he will be granted the same leave that is now being grated to the brethren who have reported in the past. This, I believe, is all that will be required, since the arrangement with the Government is su posed to cover all the cases of our brethren.

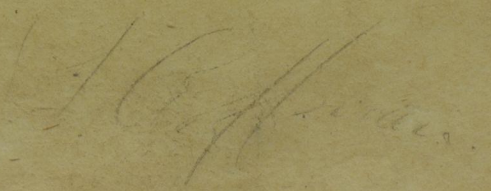
Regarding the action of the Government when the Premier and the members who are with him return from England, I feel that there will be some more regulations made that may affect our brethren to some extent. It may be that they will do as they have been doing in the United States, requiring them to be subject to Government control and placed on farms by Government appointment or some such work, but, I cannot see that they will attempt any further effort to require them to engage in any military work.

I am writing to the members of the Committee asking them their opinion regrading the printing of the synopsis of the Military laws regarding Mennonites and Tunkers. I think that it would be a good thing to have about five hundred copies and have them in the right hands for use at all times. The record of the Government in the past should be a guide for the present time and should act as a check on any efforts that even the most rabid militarist should attempt to force military service on our people.

The Cheque will be cashed so hat you will have your vouchers for reference.

Thanking you for your kindness and for your counsels in this work; I am,

yours in faith,



Com. N/R.R.O. and
Ottawa Com.

Vineland Ont., July 23rd, 1918.

Brethren:- Greeting.

Some of you have seen the copy of the laws regarding the military service regulation as applied to Quakers, Mennonites and Tunkers, which report was compiled by a lawyer in Toronto at the request of Brother thomas Ressor, Treas of the N-R.R.O. This report is complete, including all of the laws regarding this matter since the first in 1809. It is important that all of our brethren should be intelligent on thhs subject, and it is recommended that these compiled statutes be printed and planed in the hnds of our Ministers and those who would use them judiciously. The funds now on hand for the expenses of our Committee should be available for this work since these reports may be used to advantage by legislators with whom we have to deal in safeguarding our interests with the Govern~~ment~~. Please send your decision to the President of the Organization, Bro. L.J. Burkholder.

There is nothing further to report concerning the exemptions of our brethren. All are now released and at home, having been granted the Leave of absence as arranged for them. Let us thank God for this freedom and be ready to servè the Lord in the relief work proposed.

Yours in Him,

S. F. Coffman,

For the Committees.

Markham, Ont. July 24th 1918

S. F. Coffman

Vineland, Ont.

Dear brother in the Lord, - Greeting, John
 Crookes and Ray Wademan, two of our brethren here,
 have been ordered to report to Exhibition Camp for
 duty on the 25th. Also Elmer Ramer a M. B. C. man
 reported yesterday. Bro. W. Bricker asked me to go
 with him since the Toronto Headquarters (49 College St)
 stated that his name was not accredited to sign
 certificates. We took John Crookes with us. We could
 do nothing with C. Bricker's office but found that
 men ordered to report for duty must appear ^{at camp} in person,
 present their certificates. They are given a medical exam-
 ination and must fill out the application form same
 as a regular recruit. They are then posted with
 a certain company in the Batt. and if the Headquarters
 office honours the church certificate a leave of absence will
 be granted. The Ramer man was placed in Category A² and
 obtained his leave. John Crookes also had no difficulty but
 he was B² man and the officer who must sign his
 leave of absence was out for the evening. He was allowed
 to go home and return today or tomorrow and obtain his
 papers.

The officers were very civil and there should be no

difficultly in this camp. Two M.B.C. men from Stauffville are to report at Niagara this week.

It may be that they will be held a day or so until the papers are made out. but I think the leave will be granted. The Officers in Toronto seem to know about our status.

At 149 College St. we found that the name of Samuel Gardie is the only person in the M. B. C. Church authorized to sign certificates. I signed two for Mr. Bieker and he will advise Mr. Gardie to issue a few hundred blank forms and sign them for their minister.

I think this will be better for the military authorities than to have ~~over~~ so many names.

I only write these experiences for your information. Perhaps you have it from other sources also.

We have not heard how sister Ella is getting along. No news is good news. Hope you are all well as this leaves us.

As ever,

L J Burkholder

John Crookes Leave of absence granted on strength of
being Mennonite. - from July 25 - Aug 26. 1918
- Pending decision by A. A. G., M. B. No 2 Trants
a. e. p. with permission
w. e. m. p.

B. Blackley Cap. Adjt.
J. A. C. E., 2nd Br. Can. Trench Reg.

Aldersyde July 26/9/8

S. F. Coffman.
Vineland.

Dear Bro - Greetings of
Christian Love June.

Your letter of July 18th to
hand. and may say that
this letter was put into my
desk, appazantly when I was
away & have just come across
it - to day. Am sorry for the
over sight. and that I did
not get the information
to you that ~~I~~ you wanted.

In fact - when I come to
think I was away to Cuy
when it got here.

I know that there are

Some Hutterites in Alberta.
 in fact I met one of their
 men, but could not find out
 as to their having located
 near here. I understand
 the Southern Alberta Land
 Co. located them.

I have no information
 as to any agreement-which
 they have with the Government.

Sometime latter part of May
 I was in the Office of
 the Headquarters of the
 Provincial Police force
 in Calgary, and was there
 asked to say who & what
 constituted a "Mennonite"
 and how they might be identi-
 fied and was told that all
 should carry Membership Certificates
 and while there I was asked

whether I knew the Mennonites
that were locating in Alberta
at that time... and he said
they would recognize all
Mennonites as being exempt
up to such a time that
the U.S. would issue instri-
-ctions that all U.S. citizens
should (in military age) be
taken and sent back,
and at such a time he would
recognize Mennonites that were
British subjects only as being
exempt. So apparently he
did not know of any
agreement - that these people
or Brethren had made.
The Year Book on last page
has names & address of
their ministers perhaps you
could get this information
there.

The Duchess Congregation
belongs to the Alta Sask.
Conf. and are working
along well with us.

I hope Bro Garber
locates with them as
they are in need of
ministerial help.

We supply there once
a month, but this will
not be satisfactory on the
length of time.

Work in general is favorable
Bro C Z ^{Wife} Yoder made us a
helpful visit this summer.

May God Bless you & yours.

Crops as a whole are short.

God bless you in
your labor for the Master.
Yours Bro J B Stauffer

C O P Y.

Ottawa, July 26th, 1918.

Status under M.S.A. Mennonites, Tunkers, & Amish.

Sir:-

Referring to your letter of the 8th instant addressed to Col. Osborne on the marginally noted subject I beg to state that this Department has no jurisdiction whatever over Registrars, who come under the direction of the Military Service Branch, Dept of Justice.

It is pointed out that while the Central Appeal Judge has ruled that Tunkers and Ontario Mennonites are not excepted from the Military Service Act they are not debarred from claiming exemption thereunder. They should, accordingly, register and claim exemption under section 11, 1/f of the Act.

As you know instructions have been sent out to the General Officer Commanding at London and Toronto that bona fide Mennonites and Tunkers who produce the necessary certificate from a Bishop are to be released from military service. This is as far as this Department can go.

O. Tyndall.

Captain D.A.A.G.

Secy. Military Service Sub-Committee.

F. S. Scott Esq. M.P.

Galt, Ont.

C O P Y

MILITIA AND DEFENCE.

149 College Street,
Toronto Ont., July 29th, 1918.

To:-

Mr. E.M.Klink,
Glenmount, Muskoka Ont.

Status under M.S.A.1917
Mennonites, Tunkers and Amish.

Your letter of the 18th instant addressed to Colonel H. C. Bickford has been forwarded to this department for action.

It is noted in your letter that you are , apparently, in category "B" and as you have not been ordered to report, no action is necessary. Should you be ordered by the Registrar to report, it will be necessary for you to do so and provide yourself with a certificate from a Bishop of the Mennonite Church to the effect, that you were on or prior to the 12th October, 1917, a member in good faith of the Mennonite Church and conscientiously object to the undertaking of combatant service.

Isaac B. Britacher, who signed your certificate of admission to the Church, is not one who is authorized to sign your certificate when you claim leave of absence. This will be required to be signed by one of the following Bishops:

	Bishop	Jonas Snyder	Waterloo Ont.
	"	Abram Gingrich	Elmira Ont.
	"	Mannasseh Hallman	Petersburg Ont.
Acting	"	L. J. Burkholder	Markham Ont.
	"	S. F. Coffman,	Vineland Ont.

RCW/LS.

(Signed) R. C. Wideger,
Lieut. Colonel
for A.A.G., M.D.No.2.

THE BETHESDA AND STOUFFVILLE TELEPHONE COMPANY, LIMITED

D. W. HEISE, SECRETARY

ISSUER OF MARRIAGE LICENSES,
CONVEYANCER, ETC.
PRIVATE MONEYS TO LOAN.

GORMLEY, ONT. July, 29th, 1918

S. F. Coffman.

Vineland, Ont.

Dera Bro Coffman.

The following is a copy of what appeared in last Sat Golbe.

" OCTOBER 12 DIVIDING LINE.
CANNOT CLAIM EXEMPTION
ON RELIGIOUS GROUNDS IF SECT JOINED LATER.

A ruling has come from Ottawa in regard to the time when men should have been members of religious orders to secure benefit from them under the M. S. A. Any man who joined a religious order on or subsequent to Oct 13 cannot claim to benefit thereby. This finding of Ottawa has a particular bearing on the status of men who became members of the Mennonite Church in such large numbers recently. The ruling further points out that the Ontario Mennonites must establish their claim for exemption on Conscientious objectors grounds, as it has been ruled they are not included among those Mennonites excepted under the act."

I thought in case you might not have noticed this ruling it would be of interest to you. The lines are still being drawn tighter, but we believe our God is ABLE.

WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRAY.

Yours In Him.

D. W. Heise

Vineland Ont., July 29th, 1918.

L. J. Burkholder,
Markham Ont.,

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

Your letter of the 24th with information concerning the procedure in camp with our brethren who are called for service and allowed out on Leave of Absence was duly received and noted. Thank you for this description of the method used by the army officials.

The method of procedure in order to procure the Leave was described to me some time ago, in a letter from Mr. Weichel. That letter was the basis of the communication to Mr. Scott, which was copied and sent to you along with his reply. There has been no information concerning the situation since that time. Perhaps the authorities at Ottawa do not intend making any changes in their method of procedure in these cases. They do not seem to understand that there is a moral principle at stake with our brethren, and that they are just as conscientious concerning their word of promise as concerning their acts of violence. In case they brethren are required to attest for service, they have given a moral obligation to enter military service the same as other young men. There is one difference. they present their Certificate of membership with the Mennonite or Tunker Church previous to their attesting, and that is equivalent to a protest against the service and their signatures are, therefore, made under protest, and only in order that they may secure the Leave of Absence from the service against which their Certificates are evidence of their protest.

It seems that it is not possible to receive a Leave except from the Officers of the Regiment, and the signatures are necessary in order that the Officers have jurisdiction to give the privilege. But, even the Leave obligates the bearer to do military service when called upon to do so, and we have only the word of the authorities to assure us that our brethren will not be called upon to do any service after they have been given their Leave of absence.

I presume that you have seen the late report from Ottawa as printed in the Mail and Empire of July 27th. The Status of the religious bodies which object to Military service has been fixed. The Mennonites are not included in the "exceptions" of the original reading of the 1917 Act, (that is, the Ontario Mennonites), and the time limit for any bona fide membership with such organizations, in order to have the privilege of exemption has been placed as October 13th, 1917. None who have united with the Church since that date will have the privilege of exemption as members of non-resistant bodies. I am calling up Mr. Scott this morning to have a talk with him as to how this decision will effect our brethren and those of the other branches of the Church who have been given adherents' Certificates. It seems that there are those who presume to interfere with the lawful working of the Church. We may have more work before us. What is the N-R.R. O. doing with respect to the fund?

I will write you again as soon as I hear from Mr. Scott. There are a few questions that will need to be gone into regarding our relation to the Government and status in the East and West, and under the Elections act, and under former legislation.

Let us continue to pray for our freedom. Ella is much better and stronger. The Lord has helped us, and may His grace be given to all.

Yours in faith,

S. F. Coffman.

Markham, Ont. July 29th 1918

S. F. Coffman,
Vineland, Ont.

My dear brother, greetings. I reported to you a few days ago that I anticipated no trouble in obtaining leave of absence for our boys in Military District No 2. Bro John Noakes and Elmer Rame reported on Tues. Rame is a N.B.C. man. His leave was granted promptly ^{until Oct.} because bro. John was posted with another Batt. Co. in the Batt. or could not obtain his papers of leave that day, his office being absent. On Thurs. he and Roy Wideman and Edgar Fager reported and all three were given a leave of 30 days. The following appears on bro. Noakes' paper - "Leave of absence granted on strength of being Mennonite - from July 25 - Aug 26-1918" "Pending decision by A. C. G. M.D. No 2. Toronto." "W. E. P. - With permission to wear mufti."

Signed B. Blackey Capt-Adj't.

For O.C. 2nd Bn. Can. Garrison Reg.

This shows that something developed between Tues. & Thurs. and also that something is pending. The circular letter for relief fund is ready but that matter should again be held in abeyance in view of these conditions. Both the brethren Heise & Reese agree to this. If I have any further information I will report. More and more it becomes apparent that our hope is in the Lord.
As ever, L. J. Burkholder

C. LESSLIE WILSON
Ontario Registrar

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE
MILITARY SERVICE BRANCH

W. R. SMYTH,
PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVE
A. F. BARR,
H. E. MACHELL,
ASSISTANT REGISTRARS

OFFICE OF ONTARIO REGISTRAR
UNDER MILITARY SERVICE ACT

BOARD OF TRADE BUILDING

TORONTO, ONTARIO July 29th, 1918.

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

Dear Sir:--

Your letter to the Registrar of the 20th of April has been handed to me to answer. In paragraph three of the Military Service Act 7 & 8 George V. chapter 19, class one is described as follows:

"Those who have attained the age of 20 years and were born not earlier than the year 1883 and are not married, or are widowers without children"

This was the original definition of Class One. Order-in-Council No. 919 of the 20th of April 1918 enlarged the class by adding to it:

"men who have attained the age of 19 years but were born on or since the 13th October 1897 and are unmarried or widowers without children."

The Proclamation of the 6th of May calling on the 19-year-old class to register directed the Registration of all who were then 19 by the 1st of June and all subsequently attaining 19 were required to register within ten days after their 19th birthday.

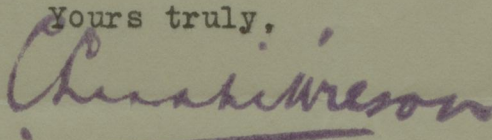
-2-

L. J. Burkholder, Esq.

July 29th, 1918.

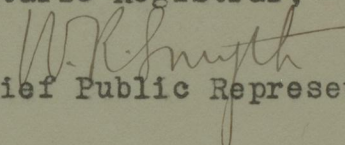
A man may now be 35 years and six months old and still liable to register providing that he was born on or after the 1st January 1883. No man of the original class who was married before the 6th July 1917 is required to register and no man of the 19-year-old class who was married prior to the 6th May 1918 is required to register. Every widower coming within the designated ages who has no children is required to register within ten days after the death of his wife.

Yours truly,



Ontario Registrar.

Per-


Chief Public Representative.

WRS.J

Box 108 New Hamburg
July 29 - 18 Ont.

L. J. Burkholder

Dear Bro and all
in same Faith Greeting in the
name of Jesus at the request of
Bro S. F. Coffman of our opinion
Re. Statues as complied to non-
resistant People in regard to Military
service since Early in 1809 to the
Present we have decided that
any thing of importance should
be done that may be of any adv-
antage to our young Brethren
and as Bro Coffman states may
be a help to our committee
in their work with the Govern-
ment. Yours in Christ

Christian Geseho
Samuel Bender

C O P Y

OFFICE OF ONTARIO REGISTRAR.

UNDER MILITARY SERVICE ACT.

Toronto Ont July, 29 th, 1918.

Name-- Wideman, Roy A.

Address, R. R. #2 Unionville. Ont.

Serial No 803246

Local Ex Trib 420/94

Consec No -

Appeal Trib-

Consec No-

Dear Sir.

Re your order to report for duty to 2 nd Batl,
Garrison C. O. R. at Toronto, on 25/7/18, on investigation it has been
found that you have been granted the following exemption.----- Mennonite-----

And Certificate to this effect will be mailed on in due course.

You may accept this letter as a cancellation of the above order to report.

Yours Truly,

C. Lesslie Wilson.

per Assistant Registrar.



House of Commons

OTTAWA GALT? July 29th, 1918.

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

Dear Mr. Coffman:-

In am enclsing copy of the letter which I have received
from Capt. Tiddall, and about which I spoke to you over the phone today.

I am,

Yours sincerely,

F. L. Scott

R. R. No 1, Waterloo, Ont.
July, 30th, 1918.

Dear Bro:

Enclosed you will find a newspaper clipping taken from the "Kitchener Daily Telegraph" with reference to exemption of Mennonites.

No doubt some of our members here at St. Jacob's will be inquiring about this, and I would be very grateful if you could give me a fuller explanation at your earliest convenience.

Yours in His service,
Moses M. Buhacher.

Vineland Ont., July 30th, 1918.

Mr. F. S. Scott, M. P.
Galt Ont.

Dear Sir:-

With reference to the conversation over the phone on yesterday afternoon, please note the enclosed clipping from the "mail and Empire" of July 27th. The two points of this decision seems to be that those who unite with the Church at the present time are not to be granted the privilege of exemption for religious reasons, and, that the Ontario Mennonites are not excepted from the M. S. A. The latter decision is the same as the previous decisions concerning which the present arrangements have been made which give us relief from military service. The former one mentioned, seems to be a new decision, limiting the time when men might unite with the Church and have the benefits of exemption.

The large increase in membership of certain branches of the Church refers principally to the congregations of the conservative branch of the Church in North Waterloo. It has not been the practice of that branch of the Church for their young people to unite with the Church until they were past twenty one or married. Under the present conditions when they were called to military service, they desired to unite with the Church for religious reasons, which privilege should be granted as lawful to any person. Their faith regarding military service is one of the principles involved in their membership. It is certain that none who were not connected with Mennonite families or brought up under Mennonite teachings were received into church fellowship. If the decision of the Department at Ottawa stands, it will prohibit all Mennonite Churches engaging in any active christian work, and is equivalent to placing a ban on the fundamental doctrine of the church since the date mentioned. This also effects a class of Mennonites who reside in Ontario, while granting privileges of freedom to all others of precisely the same faith.

While the law or the decisions of the Department concerning the exemption law effects only the regulations of the Exemption Tribunals, it may have no effect as to the arrangements of the Militia Department concerning the granting of "Leave of Absence" to those who apply for the same, and who apply as bona fide members whose certificates are signed by authorized Bishops or Ministers. We have understood that those who have united with the Church since the 6th of July 1917 are considered as adherents of the Church and will be accorded the same consideration as those who united earlier than that date. We can assure you that we are not inviting any persons to unite with the Church for the sake of avoiding military service or to hamper the work of the Government. We are not going outside of the families of our Mennonite people in granting certificates as adherents. We are acting in good faith concerning the agreement with the Militia Department and endeavor to continue thus, and appreciate the fact that the Department has kept good faith with us.

We would appreciate very much to have our boys relieved of the necessity of attesting for service and passing the medical inspection and being assigned to army corps in order to receive their Leave of Absence. We understand that their presenting a Certificate from the Mennonite or Tunker Church is equivalent to a protest to ~~either~~ their attesting or serving, but their signing for service is in their case a declaration which they are obliged to make knowing that they can not and will not be obliged to fulfil it; in either case it is a false declaration, and is embarrassing and as much a matter of conscience as the service to which they object. We realize that conditions are not what they should be and not what you would like them to be, and are thankful for what we enjoy, while we also trust that more satisfactory conditions may be arranged as occasion may afford.

Gratefully Yours,

For the Committee.

To the N-R.R.O. and
Committee to Ottawa.

Vineland Ont., July 31st, 1918.

Brethren:- Greeting in the name of Him in Whom we trust.

Your attention may have been called to the report of the decision of the Military Service Council, Department of Justice branch, Ottawa As it recently appeared in the Toronto Globe, Mail and Empire and other papers. Several communications have come in regarding these reports. Your Secretary, previous to receiving these communications, had seen the report and at once took up the matter with Hon. Mr. Scott, M.P.? Galt, He referred to a letter from the Military Service Committee which has in charge the granting of the Leave of Absence which we are now enjoying, which says that this Department has no jurisdiction over the Department of Justice and its branches. It also says that the ruling of the Chief Justice against excepting the Ontario Mennonites and Tunkers from the Act does not debar them from claiming exemption from service on religious grounds. It also states that instructions have been sent to the Commanding Officers at London and Toronto, to release from service bona fide Mennonites and Tunkers. We are aware of these decisions and arrangements. We have no other instructions to follow than those which have been given us by those who have been in touch with the Department in our behalf. It will behoove us to continue in good faith in the way that has been provided for us, and which has up to the present time proven satisfactory in securing the release of all of our brethren from the camps.

There are some questions which will arise in our minds as to the status of those brethren who have untied with the Church since the 13th of October, last, and which the Department of Justice has decided are not entitled to the privilege of exemption on religious grounds. This question has already been presented to the members of the Government with whom we are dealing and will, no doubt, be taken into consideration. Until we are further advised it will be well to continue as we have, and all of those brethren who are called should present their membership certificates to the officers commanding at the camps and receive the Leave of Absence Granted by such officers.

There have been some differences in the Leave of Absence granted at different camps and to different individuals. There is no uniformity in these papers because there may be no uniform instructions concerning the character of the Leave to be given. Let each brother called comply with the conditions of the paper which he has received from his Officer, reporting at the time specified and appealing again for further Leave.

The question as to the decision concerning a bona fide member, or a member in good faith, is also one to be considered. It may be a question with some whether the Government shall decide this or whether it will be left to the Bishops and Ministers of the Churches. This question has also been brought to the attention of those who represent us in the Government. We feel that these are weighty questions and it is not without a sense of their importance that we present them, and not without a prayer to God to assist in the solution of them for the sake of His people that we should consider them.

Let us continue in patience and prayer and thanksgiving to God for mercies that we need and for those we are receiving daily.

Notify all possible to continue as we have in our work, for we have no other instructions from the Government.

Yours in faith,

S. F. Coffman,
For the Committees.

To the M.-R.R.O. and
Committee to Ottawa.

Vineland Ont., July 31st, 1918.

Brethren/-greeting in the name of Him in whom we trust.

Your attention may have recently been called to the report of the decision of the Military Service Council, Department of Justice Branch, Ottawa, as it appeared in the Toronto Globe, Mail and Empire and other papers. Several Communications have come in regarding these reports. Your Secretary, had, previously to receiving these communications, seen the report and at once took up the matter with Hon. Mr. Scott, Galt. He referred to a letter from the Military Service Committee which has in charge the Granting of the Leave of Absence which we are now enjoying, and which says that this department has no jurisdiction over the Department of Justice and its branches. It also says that the ruling of the Chief Justice against the excepting of Mennonites and Tunkers from the Act does not debar them from claiming exemption from service on religious grounds. It also states that instructions have been sent out to commanding Officers at Toronto and London, to release from military service bona fide Mennonites and Tunkers. We are aware of these decisions and arrangements. We have no other instructions to follow than those which have been given us by those who have been in touch with the Departments in our behalf. It will behoove us to continue in good faith in the way that has been pointed out to us and which has up to the present time proven satisfactory, in securing the release of all of our brethren from the camps.

There are some questions which will arise in our minds as to the status of those brethren who have united with the Church since the 13th of October, last, and which the Department of Justice has decided are not entitled to the privilege of exemption on religious grounds. This question has already been presented to the members of the Government with whom we are dealing and will, no doubt, be taken into consideration. Until we are further advised it will be well to await information continue as we have, and all of those who are called should present their membership certificates to the commanding officers of the camps and receive the Leave of absence granted by such officers.

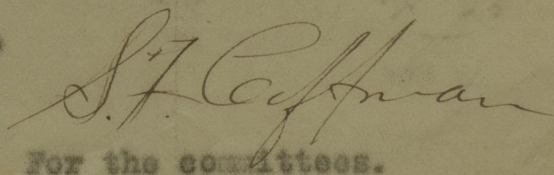
There have been some differences in the Leave of Absence granted at different camps and to different individuals. There is no uniformity in these papers because there may be no uniform instructions concerning the character of the Leave to be given. Let each brother comply with the conditions of the papers which he has received from his Officer, reporting at the time specified and appealing again for further leave.

The Question as to the decision concerning a bona fide member, or member of in good faith is also one to be considered. It may be a question with some whether the Government shall decide this or whether it will be left to the Elders and Ministers of the Churches. This question has also been brought to the attention of those who represent us in the Government. We feel that these are weighty questions and it is not without a sense of their importance that we present them and not without a prayer to God to assist in the solution of them for the sake of His people that we should consider them.

Let us continue in patience and prayer and thanksgiving to God for mercies we need and for those we are receiving daily.

Notify all possible to continue as we have in our work, for we have no other instructions from the Government.

Yours in faith,



For the committees.

Vineland Ont., May 31st, 1918.

Hon. F.S.Scott, M. P.
Galt Ont.

Dear Sir:-

Your letter of the 27th Inst., with a copy of your letter from Captain O Tyndall, Ottawa, was duly received.

The information contained in the copy of the letter from Ottawa seems to clear up the situation to a great extent. A distinction is made between the operation of the Tribunals and the Military Service Committee. The Tribunals can only define the status of the individual under the Act, 1917, and the Military Service Committee has the disposal of the case of the individual when coming under the jurisdiction of the Officers Commanding in Districts 1 and 2. Since the arrangement concerning the relief of our members from military service is made with the Military Service Committee, there should be no difficulty resulting from the decisions of the Department of Justice on the question of exemption, unless the two departments should come into conflict regarding the matter.

If the Tribunals stand by the decisions of the Department of Justice, they will not consider those persons bona fide members of the Church who have united since Oct. 13th, 1917. If the two departments cooperate, the membership certificates of such persons will not be considered grounds for granting the Leave of Absence. On the other hand, if the Commanding officers will accept the Certificates of Membership as signed by authorized Church Officials as evidence of bona fide membership there will be no difficulty and the agreement with this Department will continue to be satisfactory. But the question is raised, What shall constitute the evidence of bona fide membership, - the decision of the Department of Justice, or the decision of the Church? Nothing in the Act defines the bona fide members of the Churches described under Section 11, 1/f, of the Act, but the Department of Justice has the power to define the Act. But, if the present decision stands, our Non-resistant Churches must close their doors to our own sons, who, by force of present circumstances, are obliged to decide concerning matters of their faith. If our Churches continue in their usual christian work, even among our own people, many persons, since the publication of the decision of the Military Service Council, will consider our Churches as acting in a spirit of rebellion, insubordination, and even traitorous. We are glad to assure you that such is not the case among our people. Where larger accessions than usual have been made in some churches, it has been the case that such young men had not previously united with the Church until maturer years or until at the time of their marriage. No one will refuse a young man taking upon himself religious obligations at such a time as this present one. In the case of Mennonite and Tunker young men, the question of Non-resistance is involved in his church relationship. The Church cannot be expected to change its creed.

We have previously pointed out that the religious exemption clause does not describe our faith, and yet we are obliged to have our case decided under its provisions.

We will continue to act under the instructions received from you regarding the obtaining of Leave of Absence.

Thanking you for past favors, I am,
Yours. most gratefully,

S. F. Coffman,
For the Committee.

N.-R.B.O.

Vineland Ont. July 31st, 1918.

D. W. Heise, Sec.
Garnley Ont.

Dear Brother:- Greeting in the Master's name.

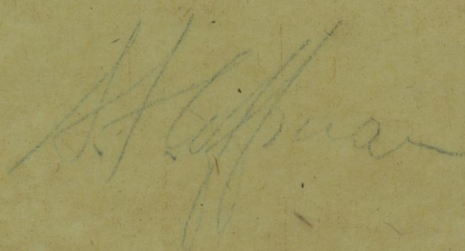
Your letter of the 29th received and noted, but not with the degree of pleasure that it other wise would have occasioned, on account of the statement copied from the Globe contained therein. I had already come into possession of a similar report, but more extended, taken from the Mail and Empire. It seems that the question of the Mennonites and Tunkers will not be allowed to rest.

The enclosed letters may help to understand what is being done so far as our side of the question is concerned. The talk that I had with Mr. Scott suggests that we continue in our applications for Leave of Absence as heretofore. If there is any hitch in the matter it will not be until the Military Service Sub-Committee at Ottawa make other arrangements regarding the release of those brethren. This is the Committee and the Officers, through which our privileges are given us. The Tribunal Department has no jurisdiction over the men that go into the hands of the Militia department. As long as these will work as they now do, we may have relief. The question will only be raised when the question of the legality of the Church Certificates are Questioned. As long as we continue to give Church membership Certificates to those who unite with the Church, either as members, or adherents under the provisions, the Certificates of the Church and not the decisions of the tribunals will be the ground upon which the Leave is granted.

It is hard for us to understand why any official would say that a man has no right to assert his opinions regarding religious questions after a certain date. Such a stand invites controversy and stands as a challenge to personal and religious liberty. We hope that no controversy will arise out of it, and in case some of our brethren are refused the privilege of exemption it will only mean a repetition of the past experiences of some of our dear boys and another effort for recognition, in which we pray and trust that the Lord will again be our Helper and Deliverer.

Will be glad for any further help in this work. I have not sent notices to all of the ministers, only to the members of the Committees, and to Brother Asa Bears of Ridgeway of your congregations.

Yours in faith and service,



Vineland Ont. July 31st, 1918.

J. Burkholder,
Markham Ont.

Dear Brother:- greeting.

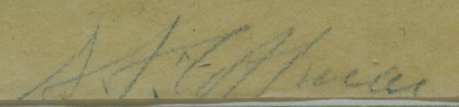
Your letters have been reaching me and that of the 29th Inst came in due time. I have since then been nurse, taking care of Ellis, who has an attack of Grippe, resulting from a chill at the time of the change of weather yesterday. She was very sick yeasterday but is some better today. We pray that she may be speedily restored, by the grace of the Lord who is our constant helper.

I am enclosing herewith two copies of letters, the one sent to the members of the Exemption Committees, and the other a letter to Mr. Scott regarding the reports that appeared in the recent papers. I had a letter from Brother Heise giving the satement of the affair in the Globe. I have the clipping from the Mail and Empire, which is a little more extended. It seems that the Department at Ottawa is still not decided as to where to place the Mennonites and Anabaptists. They are now classed as Ontario Mennonites. We do not distinguish our Church by that name, and our faith does not change with the limits of the Province.

There are a few questions suggested in the letter to Mr. Scott, and I would be glad to have an answer on those points if it is possible for him to give them. It seems that we will be best served if we work along quietly under the present provisions, without insisting on the points which are not clear. In case there is any hitch in the matter of securing release for eith the brethren who have united with the church earlier or with those who are classed as adherents, we will have to take the matter up again. otherwise let us be patient. There should be no serious objection to the collection of the funds for the relief work as long as there is not action on the part of the Government showing that they will not allow the liberty of our brethren who are called and subject to service under ordinary conditions. We had the promise of the Prime Minister that none of our boys would be compelled to do non-combatant service without first interviewing us. His statement was that there were plenty of recruits for the non-combatant branches of the army and that it was not likely that these boys would be called for such purposes. We have been obliged to see some of our boys held for some time, but they are now free, and in case others are held, we may remind the Prime Minister of his promise and seek his assistance in securing an exemption which all seem to understand we are entitled to but have not been allowed owing to the failure of the statements of religious beliefs in the Military Service Act.

We will need to work on faithfully and show our faith in the Government by working harmoniously with the provisions that are made for us and endeavor to secure better conditions by showing how our faith is constantly compromised by present arrangements, and protesting what is not in harmony with our faith and principles. Keep the brethren informed on these ~~points~~ points, and do not let them get disturbed too much by reports. We are being looked after by some of the men in Parliament and I think that their parliamentary training is equal to the Esak. There are a number of technical points, and questions of law and constitutional rights that might well be brought forward to support our claims, but it is not our business to engage in such controversies, and especially not now when the prejudices of many are so thoroughly aroused against us. So let us be patient and watch and pray. Our redemption will come from above and not from the world or under it.

In faith,



Markham, Ont. July 31st 1918

S. F. Coffman

Vineland, Ont.

Dear brother - I am enclosing clipping from Toronto Star July 24th, I spoke of something having happened between our visit to Exhibition Camp on the 23rd and the 25th. This is one thing which happened but I do not know whether this caused the "pending" decision in two John Woakes' leave of absence. The Willis Wideman case has gone to Ottawa and I believe no decision has been rendered.

The Widemans were advised not to appear at the re-hearing of this case but they know better. Two of the Frety boys were notified that their cases would be reheard in the same court on the same day. Their exemption has been cancelled.

If this court incident should in any way prejudice the Govt. or Dept. of Militia I think they should know just where the Alvinia man stands.

Bro. Theo. Reeson returned yesterday from Niagara ^{where he went} camp, with one of their men Joseph Smith. He thinks the leave of absence is assured.

I will send copies of circular letter re. Relief work letter with method for raising funds.

Fraturnally

L. J. Burkholder

CONTRIBUTION TO MEMORIAL FUND FOR RELIEF,
TO BE PRESENTED TO THE GOVERNMENT.

I. The Government has kept faith with us.

1. There were some annoyances, due to much opposition to the favors granted us.
2. None of our brethren were obliged to do military service, and we have assurance of continued exemption.
3. Suspicion regarding the future should not discount present and past favors:- we have exemptions.

II. We are able to contribute largely.

1. The past four years have brought exceptional prosperity to all.
2. The times of exceptional affliction are not the time for luxury and increasing of wealth.
3. The boy at home saves \$300.00 or more in wages per year besides unestimated gain in increased production. What if he were away?
4. We have contributed but little to other than our regular Church funds. Others have given to the demands of war in sons and money.
5. We have saved and waited to give according to our faith. We have now an opportunity to use our savings. "Do good to all men."

III. The objects of our gift to the Government.

1. The relief of widows and orphans of merchant sailors of Canada.
2. Relief of destitute in Belgium, France Syria, Armenia and other greatly afflicted localities.
3. Restoration of many wasted and destroyed farms and homes in war areas, to give an opportunity to the people to help themselves and be free from charity.
4. Supply food and clothing for many needy ones this coming Winter.

IV. Why we should give.

1. The war may be over, but the needy must be cared for.
2. The Government expects our people, especially, to do their share of charitable work. Have we done it?
3. Those who have represented our interests in the Government desire to show our opponents that we have done something worth while, for the exemptions we have enjoyed.
4. If our inactive attitude should leave us our exemption the coming years may require the payment of exceedingly large sums over which we will have no control as to their expenditure.

V. Why should we contribute to the fund?

1. It will be used by the Government as we say. Our Treasurer will receive receipts from any Society using this fund.
2. The Government has other methods of raising expense funds.
3. If the war should cease we are certain that our funds will be used for charity and not for war. Then, why not give liberally?

VI. How much to give.

1. As a man thinketh in his heart, - As the Lord hath prospered.
2. How much have we prospered in the last four years? Has the giving been in due proportion to the prosperity? God expects it to be equal.
3. Love our neighbor as ourselves. If we were the war sufferers how much would we expect the Canadian Christians to give?
4. If \$50.00 per year would have kept the son or brother in the Church from military service, how much less can we give as a free-will offering to God for our favors from the Government?
5. In many congregations each brother subscribes from \$50.00 to \$200.00 toward the relief fund.
6. There are about 7,000 members in the Non-resistant Churches in Ontario. \$100,000.00 presented to the Government would look very small as a token of our appreciation of the great favor of exemption from military service, since it would represent only about \$15.00 per member. Cannot our Churches afford more, or shall we appear ungrateful?

CONTRIBUTIONS TO MEMORIAL FUND.--2.

7. ~~IX~~ \$100,000 will not go far to relieve the awful suffering in war-stricken countries. A million dollars is being asked for by another society to relieve the needy children in Palestine alone which country is larger than two counties of Ontario.
8. Give as if you were the only one to give. Give once according as God has prospered and prove God, and receive a blessing that will be in proportion with the giving.
9. "In as much as ye have done it unto the least of these my brethren ye have done it unto me." The Lord is to be the One who shall receive our gifts. Can we withhold them?

VII. When to give.

1. At once. The need is great at the present time.
2. The invitation to meet the Government to consider our standing and the guarantee of the privileges of exemption may come at any time, and our funds should be ready.
3. What is done now in the nature of a gift may save ourselves and our children many times more in the nature of a special tax for exemption. We are not purchasing our liberty, but a gratitude that is unexpressed is not usually recognized and calls for no special recompense.

Dear Brother:- Greeting.

The Non-Resistant Relief Organization has felt the need of making a greater effort to increase the contributions to the Memorial Fund. Our people are in sympathy with the objects of this fund, but have not realized the need which demands larger giving. The Government is asking ~~nothing~~ ~~nothing~~ from us. Our boast, if it may be called such, is that our people are willing to do their share in supplying the needs of the suffering ones all over the world. We must give more than the ordinary Church collections, or our boasting will only bring us shame. The needy ones will continue to suffer if others give only as we have seemed to give. The standard set by some congregations is a worthy one, and we feel that all men easily equal their example.

Please make use of the information stated above and add what you feel to be in order in pressing this matter. It is urgent. Place this information in the hands of those who have the work of soliciting or collecting for this fund. Let us be united in our effort: We are united in our principles of faith, in our desire to relieve the suffering and let us also be united in the degree of our liberality and in the expression of thankfulness to our Government for our religious privileges, and pray that the Lord may direct the minds and hearts of those who rule over us, that we may continue to enjoy these privileges in years to come.

This Fund is entirely separate from the purchase of Government Bonds.

Yours in behalf of our Churches, our children, the Lord's suffering ones and religious liberty in Canada,

The Committee.
For S.F.C.

Vineland Ont. July 31st, 1918.

L. J. Burkholder,
Markham Ont.

Dear Brother:- greeting.

Your letters have been reaching me and that of the 29th Inst came in due time. I have since then been nurse, taking care of Ella, who has an attack of Grippe, resulting from a chill at the time of the change of weather yesterday. She was very sick yeasterday but is some better today. We pray that she may be speedily restored, by the grace of the Lord who is our constant helper.

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In faith,

