

Date: Jan. 9/75

Place: Breslau

Participant: Clayton Burkholder

#### Pre-War

- strong family-church influence towards nonresistance
- all the Mennonite boys had the opportunity to go to the CO camps; to choose any other option was to say No! to church membership
- in the community there were some real feelings that the Mennonites were not being faithful to the country, but he felt that they were not as keen as those which the CO's in the U.S. had to face
- there were some "differences of opinion" concerning those who stayed home from the camps to work on farms; one father (who was a farmer) even bought a farm so that his son could stay at home

#### War

- Montreal River - the meaninglessness, of the work and the many denominations were two topics that were the source of many discussions
- visitors from home (girl friend, family ) made it easier
- B. C. - from June/42 until April/44
- in B.C. the CO's related more to the communities because: 1) of their proximity; and 2) the CO's were providing a valuable and much appreciated service; therefore, there were many opportunities to visit local families and establish ties of friendship which cut across denominational lines; in some of the homes that he visited (eg Plymouth Brethren) there were sons of the family in the military yet these families accepted the CO's
- fellowship in the camps was good - little friction
- could have returned home earlier to work as farm labour but did not feel that this was right, so he remained in B.C. until they gave him his release
- felt that the whole CG experience was significant in shaping characters; through the exchange of ideas men were able to firm up their own convictions; there were some there as the result of someone else's convictions, but these were the exceptions