



Wideman Mennonite Church, Markham

## Mennonite Peace and Arbitration Association

In 1906, the Mennonite Conference of Ontario recommended the "organization of a Peace and Arbitration Association in each congregation for the circulation of

Peace Literature and for advancing the cause of non-resistance in every legitimate way." At least one church, Wideman Mennonite, appears to have formed a congregational association.

Was there a link between this group and the "Canadian Peace and Arbitration Society" established in Toronto in 1905? One of its proponents was a Toronto Methodist pastor, C. S. Eby, with a Waterloo County Mennonite past. If so, this would suggest that at least some Ontario Mennonites were uncharacteristically seeking out activist opportunities before the war. Generally, Mennonites were discouraged from joining outside groups that could diminish their commitment to the church.

American industrialist and philanthropist Andrew Carnegie was a key leader in the arbitration movement. He dedicated his considerable fortune towards strengthening international law in order to achieve world peace. He envisioned that establishing arbitration bodies and international courts of justice could keep the world from war.

Markham Feb 18th 1908

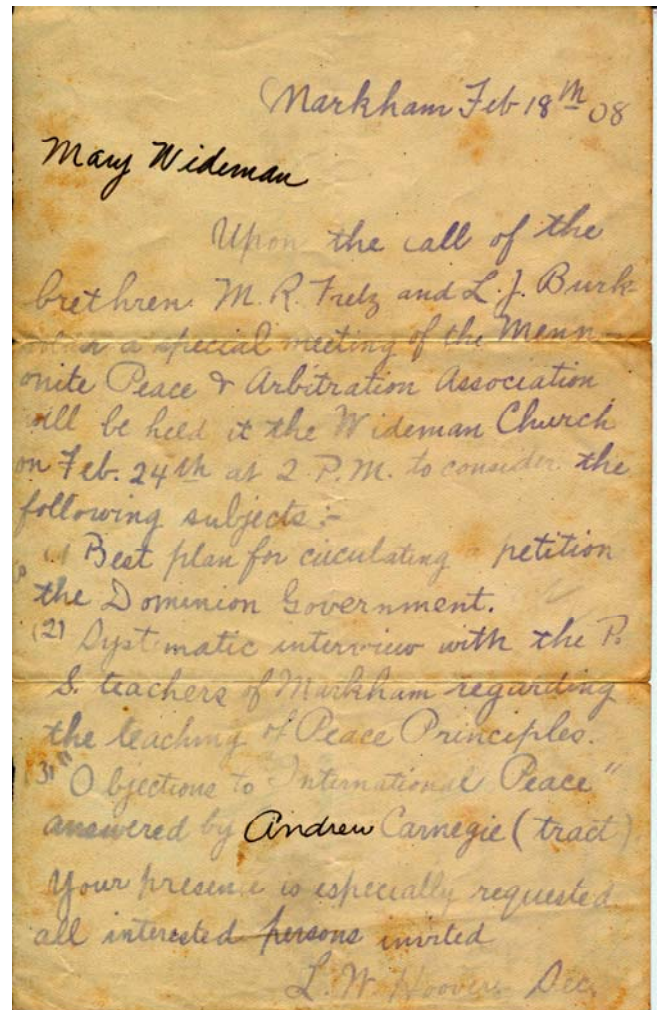
Mary Wideman

Upon the call of the brethren M. R. Fretz and L.J. Burkholder a special meeting of the Mennonite Peace & Arbitration Association will be held at the Wideman Church on Feb. 24th at 2 P.M. to consider the following subjects:

- 1) Best plan for circulating a petition to the Dominion Government
- 2) Systematic interview with the P.S. [public school] teachers of Markham regarding the teaching of Peace Principles.
- 3) "Objections to International Peace" answered by Andrew Carnegie (tract)

Your presence is especially requested. All interested persons invited.

L. W. Hoover, Sec.



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CONSTITUTION OF THE  
MENNONITE PEACE and ARBITRATION  
ASSOCIATION.

1. Name - This organization shall be known as the Mennonite Peace and Arbitration Association.

2. Object - This Association being founded on the principle that war is contrary to true religion and morality and the best interests of humanity; shall have for its object the promotion of universal and permanent peace, by means of arbitration and by cultivating the spirit of peace and good will among men.

3. Location - This Association shall be located at the Wideman Church, York Co. Ont.

4. Who Shall be Members - All persons shall be eligible for membership, who are in sympathy with the objects and aims of the Association.

5. Membership Fees - Membership fee shall be 25¢ annually; funds to be used for suitable literature and other purposes for which the Executive-Committee may deem advisable.

6. Officers - Officers shall consist of a President, Vice President, Secretary, ~~and~~ Treasurer and four Directors. Executive Committee to consist of President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer.

7. Time of Meeting - This Association shall hold at least one meeting annually, special meetings may be called at such times as the Executive may deem expedient.

8. Amendments to Constitution - Articles of Constitution can be amended by a two third vote at any annual meeting.

Constitution of the Mennonite Peace and Arbitration Association of the Wideman Mennonite Church