

MILITIA LAWS OF CANADA

DEAR BROTHER RUSSELL: –

With reference to letter in THE WATCH TOWER of November 15th last, giving excerpt from the Canada Militia Act, in connection with classes of persons entitled to exemption from military service under same, no mention was made of clause reading as follows:

"No person shall be entitled to exemption unless he has, at least one month before he claims such exemption, filed with the Commanding Officer within the limits whereof he resides, his affidavit, made before some Justice of the Peace, of the facts on which he rests his claim."

We have procured an authorized copy of said Act, further copies of which may be obtained from the King's Printer, Ottawa, Ont., or possibly from any stationer, and enclose same for your information.

From the clause quoted above it would appear that no claim for exemption will be considered unless affidavits have been filed in accordance therewith, and you will notice from a perusal of the Act that all males, between the ages of eighteen and sixty are liable to be called out for military service, at home or abroad, at any time under same, no further Act or amendment being necessary.

In view of the fact that every effort is now being made to obtain recruits here, we being approached on the streets and in every conceivable manner, with a view to having us enlist, and, as the authorities propose to raise 70,000 additional men in the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan during the next few months, they may deem it advisable to put this Act in force at any date. We would,

therefore, be glad if you will kindly advise as to our methods of procedure in this respect, and, if you deem it advisable for us to file affidavits immediately (it being our opinion at present that we should do this as soon as possible), we would appreciate advice as to suitable wording of same, so as to give the necessary facts upon which to base our claims for exemption.

Perhaps you may also think it advisable to acquaint other Canadian brethren of the terms under which exemptions may be obtained, if desired, as it does not appear to be very generally known what has to be done in such cases.

Praying the Lord's richest blessing upon you, and trusting you will be able to visit us here ere long, I am,

Your brother by His Grace,

W. T. HOOPER.

WHAT BIBLE STUDENTS SHOULD DO

The above letter is of great importance to members of the International Bible Students' Association residing in Canada. The full text of the law respecting militia and defense of Canada – Chapter 41 R.S. 1916 – is published by S. E. Dawson, Ottawa. It could be ordered direct for, probably, five cents, or possibly could be obtained from any Canadian stationer. Its Eleventh Article enumerates exemption from service and includes "persons who, from the doctrines of their religion, are averse to bearing arms and rendering personal military service, under such conditions as are prescribed." 4 E. VII. c. 23, s. 12.

Paragraph twelve declares, as is pointed out in the foregoing letter, that "No person shall be entitled to exemption unless he has, at least one month before he claims such exemption, filed with the commanding officer within the limits whereof he resides his

affidavit made before some Justice of [R5861 : page 63] the Peace of the facts on which he rests his claim. When exemption is claimed on any ground the burden of proof shall always rest on the person claiming it."

In harmony with the above requirement we advise that all Canadian members of the I. B. S. A., between the ages of 17 ½ and 60 years, at once write out the following statement, drawn up by the Hon. J. F. Rutherford, make affidavit to it before a Justice of the Peace, and forward it, as directed, to "the commanding officer within the limits whereof he resides":

Dated at _____ 1916.

To the Honorable _____ Commanding Officer of _____ Honorable Sir: –

In accordance with the provisions of Chapter 41 of "AN ACT RESPECTING THE MILITIA AND DEFENSE OF CANADA," and known as "MILITIA ACT 4 E VII.," and particularly sections 11 and 12 thereof, I herewith hand you, to be filed as required by said Act, my affidavit setting forth the facts on which I rest my claim for exemption from liability to service in the Militia, and respectfully request that you cause the same to be filed as provided by said law.

Respectfully, (Signed) _____
AFFIDAVIT.

Province of _____ } ss. Dominion of Canada }

I, _____ (name of affiant), being duly sworn, upon my oath state: That I am a male citizen of Canada, and am _____ years of age; that I reside at _____; that I am averse to bearing arms or rendering personal military service under the conditions as prescribed by "Militia Act 4 E VII.," and I make

this affidavit, as provided by section 12, subdivision 2 of said Act and of Chapter 41 of "AN ACT RESPECTING THE MILITIA AND DEFENSE OF CANADA," for the purpose of obtaining exemption from liability to service in the Militia, and the facts upon which I rest my claim for such exemption are as follows, to wit:

I am a Christian and the religious doctrines which I believe and hold preclude me from bearing arms or rendering personal military service; I am a member of the International Bible Students Association, a religious Association organized under the laws of Great Britain, with its chief office at No. 34 Craven Terrace, Paddington, London, England, and also with offices at No. 124 Columbia Heights, Brooklyn, N. Y., U. S. A., and which has classes or congregations throughout the Dominion of Canada; I subscribe to and am in harmony with the religious doctrines taught by said International Bible Students Association, which are, to wit, that all members thereof avow a full consecration of will, heart and life to God's service – as footstep followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and the doctrines and teachings concerning His Kingdom of Peace and good will; I am obligated by my conscience and by engagements with said Bible Students Association to "follow peace with all men," and to do violence or injury to none; that such is in harmony with the teachings of the Master, Christ Jesus, that His followers practise non-resistance; that the requirements of the International Bible Students Association are that its members be obedient to the "powers that be" in so far as their laws and requirements do not conflict with the teachings of Jesus Christ; that the provisions of said "Militia Act 4 E VII." are in conflict with the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ, as I understand and believe the same.

Dated at _____
_____ 1916. (Sign here) _____
Subscribed and sworn to before
me, a Justice of the Peace within
and for _____, this _____ day of

_____A. D. 1916.

_____Justice of the Peace.

Every WATCH TOWER subscriber is recognized as a member of the International Bible Students' Association. The WATCH TOWER being the official organ of the Association its yearly subscription price includes annual membership fee of all Associated Bible Students.

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