

World War 2 - Epp/CGCA RCA List for British Columbia – Yarrow

Mennonites at War – A DOUBLE –EDGED SWORD Canadian Mennonites in World War II by Peter Lorenz Neufeld; 138 pages; c 1997 by Elsie Marie Neufeld. Published by DTS Publishing, P.O. Box 407 Deloraine, Manitoba R0M 0M0 .

Following list of Yarrow Soldiers taken from the list of BC soldiers on pages 72 – 78.

Abbreviations: b – birthdate; cd –confirmed date of death, which isn't always the actual date of death); nk – next of kin; f – father; m – mother; w – wife; sf – step father; fr – friend; r – rank; ed – enlistment date; r – rank; od – overseas date; dd – discharge date;

BLOCK, Jacob - b 5-10-23 nk John f Yarrow r Pte ed 17-1-44, od 20-7-44 dd 12-9-46

ENNS, Abe – b 24-7-22. nk Sarah m Yarrow r Pte ed 27-11-42, od 10-1-45 dd 16-3-46

ENNS, John W. – b 6-5-21 nk Sarah m Yarrow; r Pte dd 11-10-45.

EPP HENRY – B 15-4-27, NK Gertrude m Yarrow; ed 17-4-45, dd 22-9-45

EPP, Jake – b 25-9-21 nk Mary m Yarrow ed 17-1-44, od 15-3-45, dd 6-6-46.

EPP, Jake – b 1-5-21 nk Jacob f Yarrow, r Pte ed 11-6-42, dd 1-6-46

FALK, Peter B. – nk Bernhard f Yarrow, r Pte ed 19-6-42, od 20-8-42, dd 31-5-46
Peter joined the army in Yarrow 1942. He was sent to Thunder Bay, Lake Superior Regiment (Motor); then to England, France, Belgium and Holland. Attached to Motor Carrier division/LSR and rose through the ranks to sergeant in charge of his crew. He was wounded by snipershot in Holland 1944 and hospitalized. Unfit for active duty, assigned to barracks in Nijmegen, Holland as Regimental police sergeant in Germany for 9 months. In 1945 he signed up for occupation service in Germany as instructor on anti-tank guns with the Winnipeg Rifles for three months. Discharged 31 May 1946. *Submitted by Peter & Doreen, Nanaimo, B.C.*

FAST. Bernhard G. – b 7-4-26 nk George f Yarrow; r Pte ed 13-12-44, dd 24-11-45

FAUST, Henry R. – nk Dick fr. Yarrow, Pte od 20-6-41, dd 27-9-45

FRIESEN, Peter D. – b 31-3-22 nk Dietrich f Yarrow; r Pte ed 14-1-44, dd 29-3-46

FROESE, Frank – nk Henry f Yarrow, Pte ed 18-4-43, od 26-4—43 dd 30-9-44

GIESBRECHT, Jake H. – b 21-5-25 nk Jacob f Yarrow; R Pte ed 25-1-44, od 10-3-45, dd 10-9-45

GOETZ, Rudolph – b 10-3-21 nk George f Yarrow; r Pte ed 17-12-43, od 25-6-44, cd ?-3-45 (age 24). Only son of Yarrow veterinarian, killed while serving in Field Ambulance Unit. His family suffered through condemnation of all who had worn a uniform. *Submitted by Victor Wiebe, Abbotsford, B.C.*

HARDER, John – b 25-12-24 nk John f Yarrow, ed 13-7-44, od 31-1-45, dd 9-4-46.

HARDER, Nicholas – b 31-10-22, nk Henry f Yarrow r Pte ed 24-11-43, od 21-10-44, dd 11-4-46

ISAAK, Cornelius C. – b 25-1-13, nk Cornelius f Yarrow ed 12-9-44, dd 12-4-46

ISAAK, Peter C. – b 12-3-42, nk Cornie f Yarrow r Pte ed 12-3-42, od 21-8-42 dd 16-10-45

KEHLER, Frank – nk Bernard f. Yarrow, r Pte ed 6-10-41, dd 4-5-45

KEHLER, John – b 6-6-20, nk Bernard f Yarrow, r Pte ed 2-12-43 (?) od 25-6-44, dd 15-6-46

LETKEMAN, John – b 16-7-24 nk David f Yarrow, r Pte ed 15-1-43, od 24-11-43, dd 25-10-45

LETKEMAN, Peter – nk Margaret m Yarrow, r Pte od 20-6-41, dd 26-10-45

PAETKAU, Peter - b 17-7-21 nk Elizabeth m Yarrow, ed 28-5-43, dd 14-10-44

PENNER, Frank – b 26-3-24 nk Heinrich f Yarrow, r ed 7-12-43, od 2-6-44 dd 5-7-46

PETERS Peter G. – b 12-2-19 nk Cornelius f Yarrow r Sgt ed 28-5-42, od 11-12-42, dd 20-8-46

RATZLAFF, Henry – nk Henry f Yarrow r Pte ed 17-6-42, od 22-3-43, dd 15-2-46

REIMER, Henry A. – b 9-8-24 nk Abraham f Yarrow; ed 14-2-44, dd 13-6-46

SAWATSKY, Frank J. – b 23-5-15 nk Annie m Yarrow, r Pte ed 19-1-44, od 16-6-44, dd 19-3-46 Medical Corpsman. He attended Yarrow Thanksgiving service at Yarrow MB with *Victor Wiebe, see Victor's report on this service and what followed.

SIEMENS, John – b 19-8-18 nk Frank sf Yarrow; ed 26-5-43, dd 18-11-43

THIESSEN, Dan – b 21-9-21 nk Elizabeth m. Yarrow; ed 4-5-43, dd 17-5-46

THIESSEN, Nicholas A. – b 23-6-14 nk Susan m Yarrow; ed 11-7-44, dd 23-4-46

WALL, Henry – b 5-12-25 nk Elizabeth m Yarrow; ed 13-9-44, dd 19-10-44

WIEBE, Jake – b 1-11-22 nk Jake f Yarrow; r Pte ed 5-2-43 od 26-8-43, dd 1-6-44

WIENS, Peter I – b 12-12-16 nk Margaret w Yarrow; r Pte 12-6-43 od 26-12-43 dd 15-2-46

WILLMS, Jacob – nk Abram f Yarrow; r Gnr ed 19-10-41 od 14-6-42 dd 24-1-46

***Wiebe Victor J** – He writes: In the spring of 1941, as soon as my classes ended after my second year at Prairie Bible Institute at Three Hills Alberta, about six or seven of us from school joined the army at Camrose for basic training. While there, we were in a Bible study group every Wednesday evening with the Salvation Army. We also had a quartet and sang and witnessed at street meetings.

My army number was M35705 and, after basic training, I was made an instructor with the rank of L/Cpl. I served at this for a month or so, but since most of my friends had moved on in the medical corps and it seemed that the only way I would be able to get overseas would be to transfer to that corps, I did so. I was sent to Ottawa for medical corps training, first aid etc., etc. We were drafted overseas in September or October and ended up in Aldershot, Hampshire, England. There I shovelled coal until I contracted pneumonia and was sent

to hospital in Farnborough, then on to the convalescent camp in Brixham, S. Devon, where I became a medical orderly.

Within a few months I found myself totally unsuitable for this job and, after some frustration, managed to get a transfer to the intelligence corps. I enjoyed this work very much and passed all the examinations and intensive training successfully.

I was promoted again to the rank of L/Cpl and eventually was confirmed in the rank of Cpl. In the meantime, I had fallen in love with a beautiful Christian girl in the Brixham Baptist Church and we were married there October 17, 1942. I was then posted to 3rd Canadian Infantry Division. I landed in France on D-Day June 6, 1945 and served on the continent until we ended up in Wilhelmshaven, Germany. There I was active in arresting war criminals until 1945 when I was the first one sent home and arrived back in Canada August 1945. After disembarkation leave with my family who now lived in Yarrow, BC, I received my discharge and attended UBC, taking the veteran's course in agriculture. In the spring of 1946, I received my diploma and after battling with the VLA, I finally qualified for settlement under the Veteran's Land Act. In July 1946 my wife and son joined me in Yarrow and we lived a short time in a cabin built on my parent's 15 acre farm.

Most of the CO's and military personnel were discharged by this time and the Mennonite Brethren Church in Yarrow hosted a Thanksgiving service for all returned men and CO's. After much persuasion by my stepfather, Mr. A.A. Hamm, I agreed to speak in this service, which I did in English as there were some in the service that did not understand German. After giving my testimony and explaining why I had volunteered to serve my adopted country (I was born in Russia in 1919 and came to Canada with my widowed mother in 1923), I quoted scripture as to *'rendering unto Caesar that which is Caesar's and unto God that which was God's'*. Also, the instruction to the soldiers: *'to obey your masters and be content with your wages'*, etc.

After I sat down, one speaker after another tore me apart, all in German, and condemned everyone who had worn a uniform (there were about 30 returned men in the front pews) while praising the CO's who 'had been torn from their mother's arms and had to serve in the bush, away from home, for up to six months.

To make a long story short, all of us walked out of that church completely embittered by their unchristian attitude since, had we lost the war, their freedom to worship would have been lost, too (e.g. Pastor Bonhoeffer, who was executed just before the ceasefire.).

I have never regretted my military service. Our training was extensive. We attended courses such as the Matlock (Derbyshire, England) School of Intelligence where our lectures were all in German. We sang Folkslieder and learned all about the German Gestapo, Abwehr service, police and military as well as the political organizations. We were trained by officers from Scotland Yard in detective work etc. I worked with the local Police Detective Sgt. Downey who was responsible for civil security while I was responsible for military security.

As we liberated towns, we tried to restore order and local government as soon as possible. Our field security section was often involved and as soon as the rear echelons caught up with us, we would turn it over to a "town major" who would stay until the local people took over. We would also question prisoners for information and seek out agents left behind by the German army.

Life went on: I joined the Royal Canadian Legion in 1945 and have been a member ever since. We had a dairy farm. I spent some time as an immigration officer and as acquisition agent for B.C. Hydro. I served 23 years as a councillor and alderman in the District of Sumas and the Municipality of Abbotsford. And... after many years, I found my way back into the church through the medium of music with the Central Heights' Men of Song. I was accepted for baptism by the MB Church and I and my wife have been members there for 14 years. We have a family of 8 children, six of them married, 16 grandchildren and two great-granddaughters, and we are enjoying our retirement. GOD HAS BEEN GOOD. Submitted by Victor Wiebe, Abbotsford, BC.

WITTENBERG, Abe – Killed while serving in Field Ambulance Unit. Family suffered through condemnation of all who had worn a uniform. Submitted by Victor Wiebe, Abbotsford, BC.

