13. March 15, 1710. Letter from Jonas Loheer, minister at Offstein in the Palatinate, to Thielman Rupp at Neuwied, including a copy of a letter by the Mennonites in Alsace of March 6, 1710, directed to him, about those deported from Switzerland with the request that the Palatines or the Dutch take interest in the lot of the deported. In connection with this writing he asks for Rupp’s intercession with the Dutch on behalf of these unfortunates and says the Palatines are very poor. (Jonas Loheer wrote one of the letters regarding the Ammann-Reist Division in 1695.)[[1]](#footnote-1)

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Offstein[[2]](#footnote-2) March 15, 1710

Here follows a copy of a letter which was sent to us from Alsace.

Copy

“With a wish for everything good for you in soul and body, we greet you, dear brethren, ministers, and elders in the Palatinate at Mannheim. We are informing you that we have received a letter from Switzerland, saying that the prisoners will be exiled with the ministers put in irons. Accordingly the people and brethren in Switzerland have written us as to whether perhaps we could release them at Breisach or Strassburg. But we don’t know if we can accomplish anything or not. So we make a friendly appeal to you as to whether you would yet see if you could set them free in the Palatinate [as they pass through] or in Holland. We understood at first that this would happen the middle of March or perhaps somewhat earlier, as soon as the 10th or 11th of March. So we ask you in a very friendly manner that you take the situation seriously. This was written with the approval[[3]](#footnote-3) of Jacob Kleiner of Jebsheim, Hans Schneider of Boltzen,[[4]](#footnote-4) Hans Blum of Kühnheim, and Martin Egly. We are of the opinion that they will bring them in a ship on the Rhine.

[Dated Kühnheim March 6, 1710. Hans Bachman from Heidolsheim,

Philips Hage, Hans Grob, Hans Wiere from Baldenheim.”[[5]](#footnote-5)

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Worthy brother Hans Virenschoss, Thielman Rupp,[[6]](#footnote-6) along with all the elders, and brethren, from the foregoing copy you can see what was written and desired of us.

Several ministers and bishops having been met with me desire that I should write you concerning this, as well as to those in Holland, that it is our wish, if we cannot get them released, and you could accomplish more, it would mean much to us.

Yet when they get them onto the Rhine River, we hope that it will not be so ill intentioned [for those deported]. A common rumor is indeed current to the effect that the Swiss noblemen, to whom the Queen of England has given some lands in America, which are held by the Swiss noblemen to give them [the lands] to them [the deportees] in that country.[[7]](#footnote-7) Time will tell how everything turns out.

Further concerning conditions in this land, reports mention no great

illnesses. The harvest has failed. A malter of grain brings four guilders, spelt[[8]](#footnote-8) two guilders, if conditions hold.

I am now in my seventieth year,[[9]](#footnote-9) have trouble walking, and am frail.

My brother-in-law is a hemp cutter and is with me. We[[10]](#footnote-10) have our households together. Neither of us have children.

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There is a great lack of ordinary foodstuff for many people. I will shorten this letter. Warm greeting to all of you from all of us. Remembering one another in prayer is our desire.

Your loving, willing servant and

brother in Christ Jesus,

Jonas Loheer[[11]](#footnote-11) of

Offstein

[page 4: address]

To the honorable and

prudent Thielman

Rupp in Neuwied[[12]](#footnote-12)

north of [?] Koblenz toward

Weisenturm

[postage] paid

Neuwied

Kobl[enz]

Urgent

Urgent

1. 13 John D. Roth, Letters of the Amish Division. (Goshen, Ind.: Mennonite Historical Society, 2nd edition, 2002), pp. 59-63. Jonas Loheer, who was a Reistian, is referred to in 14 documents over the period from 1690 to 1709 in Lowry, Documents of Brotherly Love, 1635-1709, I. Other items written by Jonas Loheer are Document 25 in the present volume and A 1434-39 and A 1444 (not yet published). Loheer’s name is usually misspelled in references to the Amish Division. See note in Lowry, Documents of Brotherly Love, I, p. 649. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Offstein, a village near Worms in Rhenish Hesse, with a Mennonite congregation founded by Swiss refugees soon after the end of the Thirty Years’ War in 1648. Jonas Loheer was minister here from before 1670 and until after 1714. ME, IV, 23. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. This refers to Document 51. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Baltzenheim, a village near Jebsheim, or Bootzheim in Alsace? [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Jebsheim, Kühnheim, Heidolsheim, and Baldenheim were all places in Alsace with Mennonite activity. ME I, 69-70. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Hans Firnschus and Thiell Rupp wrote a letter from Neuwied to the Mennonite church at Krefeld on Feb. 18, 1695. Lowry, Documents of Brotherly Love I, pp. 588-589. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. The meaning of this sentence in the original is uncertain. Loheer has probably heard of the colonization proposals by the Swiss, Franz Louis Michel, Christoph von Graffenried, and George Ritter. Ruth, The Earth Is the Lord’s, pp. 147-148, 156-157. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. a hard grained wheat. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. From this we learn Jonas Loheer was born around 1640. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Loheer’s wife must have been much younger than he since his widow was still living at Offstein in 1738. Hermann and Gertrud Guth; J. Lemar and Lois Ann Mast. Palatine Mennonite Census Lists, 1664-1793. (Elverson, Pa.: Mennonite Family History, 1987), pp. 32, 37. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)
11. Previously printed references to him (e. g., Letters of the Amish Division) give his name as Lohr, but when he writes his own signature, it always has two syllables. [↑](#footnote-ref-11)
12. Neuwied, a town in Rhineland-Palatinate, 7 miles (11 kilometers) northwest of Koblenz (Coblentz). ME III, 859-860. This refers to Thielmann Rupp, born in 1656, who was leader of the Mennonite congregation there for 26 years. ME IV, 379. Weisenturm is a village near Neuwied. Interview with Gary Waltner on Aug. 25, 2001. [↑](#footnote-ref-12)