147. March 28, 1711. Runckel writes to the Mennonites in the Netherlands: He has handed over their letter to Peter Gerber. He is surprised that not more Mennonites have reported in spite of the fact that his circular letter and news of the amnesty have achieved a wide circulation and, accordingly, presses for expedition of the circular letter from the Netherlands. He sends a few more copies of the amnesty and thanks the Dutch Committee apparently for a personal gift.

[page 1]

Bern[[1]](#footnote-1) the 28th of March 1711.

Very worthy, etc.

My especially highly honored Sirs!

My last letter was from the 18th of this current month,[[2]](#footnote-2) which I hope has been safely delivered to my highly honored Sirs. Since then, I have received your very pleasant letter of the 6th of the current month safely and from it learned with satisfaction that my communications of the 11th, 14th, 18th, and 21st of February[[3]](#footnote-3) all have properly arrived; also, that my highly honored Sirs are content, as wished, with their contents and with what has further occurred here and has been done with the poor Anabaptists. This has likewise caused me not a little joy, trusting in a confident hope that my letters of the 25th of February, the 11th and 18th of the present month[[4]](#footnote-4) since then with their enclosures have likewise safely come to hand and are

vouchsafed my highly honored Sirs’ approval.

I have forwarded the letter of my highly honored Sirs to Peter [page 2] Gerber[[5]](#footnote-5) through a trusted friend, and with it I also have reminded him afresh of his obligation, so that I hope he will now know how to keep himself within the bounds of discretion.

Otherwise at present everything is very quiet in the affairs of the poor Anabaptists here. And yet with all, I am not a little surprised that up to now so few come forward of those Anabaptists hidden in the countryside as well as those scattered outside the land, who might benefit from the amnesty. Especially since I know for sure that the announcement of freedom has reached them, for in spite of the fact that they are the farthest, the congregation at Mannheim has actually answered my circular letter addressed to them dated the 19th. They have assured me that they had just sent the letter on by post directed to the congregation at Zweibrücken.

In any case, I would like to hope that over the course of time the good people will gather here in order to complete the disposal of their possessions still remaining here in this country before the expiration of the set deadline. In this case at the least, I would not allow myself to be careless, but I feel that in this matter the longer it goes, the more necessary it would be that my highly honored Sirs’ proposed [page 3] circular letter be distributed very promptly to these good people in the whole country. I myself should undertake the suggested measures, that is, some journeys into the countryside, encourage them to depart, also speak a word to them through their officials and also other leaders, and offer a helping hand so that everything may proceed in a much more orderly and prompter manner. Also, at the same time I may actually learn how great the number of

banished persons will be in order that I could busy myself with the needed preparations.

Although on the 25th of last month I have given myself the honor to send to my highly honored Sirs a number of copies of the open letters of freedom published here, in accord with the same desire I shall add yet a few copies here so that you can help yourselves to them, in case the first, contrary to my better expectation, should have been lost.

Moreover, I express my best thanks from the depth of my heart, my

highly honored Sirs, for the choice congratulations made in favor of my newly born son as well as my worthy spouse and dear children. I most humbly pray God the Lord that He [page 4] hear in grace and would respond a thousand-fold in return to my highly honored Sirs and their dear ones.

I remain meanwhile, besides a commitment into God’s powerful, gracious protection and further the commendation of myself and mine, with my whole soul,

My highly honored Sirs’

Most devoted servant,

Johann Ludwig Runckel.

1. 147 This document is translated into Dutch in Vorsterman’s Relaes (A 1392) on pp. 170-171. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. This is Document 144. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. These are as follows: February 11 is the date for Documents 133 and 131; February 14 is for Documents 134 and 135; February 18 for Document 137; February 21 is Document 138. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. These are as follows: February 25 is Document 140; March 11 is Document 142; March 18 is Document 144 as also in the note above. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Runckel had asked the Committee to write a letter of reproof to Peter Gerber on February 21 in Document 138 and also referred to the birth of a son in that same document. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)