173. July 8, 1711. From Runckel to the Committee in Amsterdam: The last passports have been received. On July 13 the unwanted Anabaptists will depart from Bern and Neuchâtel; around July 17 they will be at Basel, and at the latest proceed farther on July 20. At the moment of the departure Hans Bürki and Samuel Räber will be set free to embark with them. Approval has been granted to Benedict Leemann and Christen Dubach to remain in the land because of their advanced age. He reports about the remittance and bill of exchange. He praises the zeal of Ritter and recommends honoring him on his arrival in the Netherlands with a generous gift because of the great savings of expense which he has worked out.

[page 1]

Bern[[1]](#footnote-1) July 8, 1711

Very worthy, etc.

My especially highly honored Sirs!

Since the departure of the unfortunate local Anabaptists stands before the door, in that it will proceed inevitably on the 13th of this month, I have accordingly been so overburdened with duties that I scarcely know where to begin. Considering the lack of time, I shall inform my highly honored Sirs with these lines only about the reception of your very welcome communication of the 26th of last month, besides the subjoined resolution of their High and Mighty Lords, the passport of the Electoral Palatinate, and the authentic copy of the replies of the Archbishopric of Cologne. To this I should add, as reported above, that the departure from here and from Neuchâtel[[2]](#footnote-2) will occur on the 13th of this month; that it is hoped they will be at Basel on the 17th of this month, to finish up there and get everything completely in order on the 18th; it is planned to continue the journey on down the Rhine on the 19th or at the latest on the 20th. Because I want to go by land to Basel, I expect to arrive there on the 15th and [page 2] provide all necessary arrangements to expedite the trip of these unfortunate people, and then to employ the very useful credentials of their High and Mighty Lords.

Hans Bürki and Samuel Räber will be handed over to me on the spot when the ships touch land in order to go with the others to Holland. On the other hand, at my request the illustrious Canton has resolved to allow the imprisoned Benedict Leemann and Christen Dubach as sick, decrepit old men to die in their own homes and to release them from the journey.

From the moneys received, I have actually already paid out 7700 rixdollars to Messrs. Malacrida and Co.,[[3]](#footnote-3) which, including the remainder, has been delivered to them. This they will refund to my highly honored Sirs in Amsterdam at face value on five or six days sight, and accordingly they are giving me the required letter of exchange. Of course, there would have been a little gain by lending it out, but I supposed that the good people might really need their money as soon as they arrived at your place.[[4]](#footnote-4) So I considered it better to gain a little time than to gain a little money. I have

also given Mr. Ritter 2,256 rixdollars, a little at a time, concerning which he will keep a record for my highly honored Sirs as well as of that which he draws from the passengers and the affluent Anabaptists as an additional payment for the required maintenance on the way.

[page 3]

Since there will be very few lacking in the number of 500, the heat will be great, the baggage much, and the contract with the ship people finalized, so we will allow the five ships to depart in God’s name. Mr. Ritter will report at Mannheim concerning the passports of the Landgrave of Hesse and at Emmerich concerning the route that he will take, and will ask only at the place where he must disembark that he find money ready so that he can reckon up with the ship people and pay them. Then they can come off our expense account and return home again at the designated time, since these people must be sent on home without loss of time.

Because Mr. Ritter has put forth exceptional efforts in all this matter and has made it so much his business in all particulars, and further wants to and will make it his business, those Anabaptists under his oversight will have reason to find it difficult to complain about him. I should thus most urgently ask and request my highly honored Sirs that, besides his honorable wage according to the bill he submits, you should consider an extra compensation appropriate to the extremely great trouble he has taken, so that he has no basis for complaint. I can assure my highly honored Sirs quite truthfully that without this man I neither could nor might organize all the arrangements necessary for this journey, not only [page 4] as is proper and as they now are, but if as a foreigner and in addition a public official I had to negotiate concerning everything necessary by myself, it would have cost at the least one third more than it does now.

With this I commit my highly honored Sirs into the all-powerful,

gracious protection of God and besides committing myself and mine to your devoted prayer, remaining always,

My highly honored Sirs’

Most devoted servant,

Johann Ludwig Runckel.

1. 173 This document is translated into Dutch in Vorsterman’s Relaes (A 1392) on pp. 205-206. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Neuenburg. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. The Malacrida bank was founded by Niklaus Malacrida (1658-1742) who was close to pietistic, nonconformist circles in Bern. Nikolaus Linder. Die Berner Bankenkrise von 1720 und das Recht (Zürich, 2004). Information supplied by Hanspeter Jecker . [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Vorsterman translates this as “a uso was wel een wÿnig te winnen geweest maar also ik vermeÿnd heb dat deese lieden zoodra zÿ aangekomen zÿn hun geld wel mogten nodig hebben.” p. 206. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)