212. November 30, 1711. A letter from the Mennonite congregation at Hamburg. Although they acquiesce in the decision of the Swiss to remain in Holland, they regret that their refusal to go to Prussia will make a very unfavorable impression on the King of Prussia. Further, they make a crediting to account of some advances made by them with the share which they were assessed for the Swiss needs.

[folio 1 recto]

To the Ministers, Committee Members

for the Swiss matters

Hamburg, November 30, 1711

Worthy Brothers,

We have received your letter of October 31 and understood the contents. Our reply, given in friendship, is that we are surprised that the Swiss brothers and their fellow countrymen are not inclined to live in the territory of His Majesty of Prussia, since that prince makes such benevolent offers as can be desired, including more liberty than can be had under the authority of that state.

Besides the offer of the free exercise of religion that would pave the way and open a door for this [lenience] in all of the aforesaid Majesty’s territory, such as being included in the offer, our fellow believers in all trades would be allowed to travel under this protection all through Germany with their trades. This may not be important in Holland, but for others living on German soil this is a point to consider. We, with you, will leave it up to free choice of those friends, but we feel disgraced when the Lord Envoy from Prussia speaks of it and we do not know how we can negotiate with him to keep the effort going. We find it much more advisable to propose to our small number here, out of consideration for our friends in Holland and other provinces, that we, [folio 1 verso] being far away, basically can do nothing, etc. It is certain that the King of Prussia would gladly have the Mennonites in his country, the more the better, but we fear that if the favor is accepted by no one, on the next occasion the Court will no longer pay any attention to the Mennonites. We sincerely wish the aforesaid Swiss the

enjoyment of a tranquil dwelling and a source of income and the blessing of the Lord therein.

Because of the general resolution made to pay out first 20, now 30 percent of the collected money [for this purpose], we have considered it right to withhold from our advances the money for the costs of the journey out of 30 percent, the approximately f450 – that we would need to allow you. We have paid for expenses of travel provisions, coats, cushions,

and fur hats the sum of Mt/r[[1]](#footnote-1) 50.11.-

for the journey to Danzig t/r[[2]](#footnote-2) 300, less [?] 2/3 toll,

leaving cash on hand of t/r 269.10.-

to Herman Kessel their travelling companion [we have given]

the costs of the trip from Danzig to here, f 295.12. in all [?];

given to him for this purpose cash from Hamburg . . Mt/r 266.-

for their journey to Holland [we have paid] 24 gf[[3]](#footnote-3) less [?] 2/3 toll,

adding up to

f 40 in Dutch money, equals Mt/r 118.-;

our expenses in this matter are Mt/r 704. 5.-, [[4]](#footnote-4)

in Dutch money, approximately f 525, and therefore a little more

[folio 2 recto]

was paid than the projected 30 percent. Would you be so kind as to note that concerning the further expenses of Danzig, the friends there and those in the Werders[[5]](#footnote-5) have taken care of them. We remain, after having greeted you warmly,

Your obedient servants, friends and brothers in Christ,

The ministers of the Mennonite congregation

in Hamburg and Altona,

Jan de Lanoy

Jacob van Campen

Jan Elias Münster[[6]](#footnote-6)

Reindert Jansen

Daniel Smiessen

Jan Beets[[7]](#footnote-7)

Jacob Becker

Jan Gierling

[folio 2 verso]

Hamburg, dated

November 30, 1711.

Inselkloster in Bern where Anabaptists, including Bendicht Brechtbühl, were imprisoned. This identification was made by Isaac Zürcher in “Die Täufer um Bern,” p. 31, attributing the drawing to G. Sickinger. Also the drawings on pages 383 and 1288 of the present volume (all different from the Merian map of Bern on page 166) come from the article by Zürcher.

1. 212 The Mecklenburg thaler, here perhaps, like the Prussian thaler, was subdivided into 48 schillings, each of 12 pfennigs. However, it is not clear which currency is indicated. Cf. Craig, p. 222. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. thaler? [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. gold guilders? [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. These numbers add up to 703.21. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. See notes in Documents 128 and 195. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. See Lowry, Documents of Brotherly Love, I, pp. 637, 645. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Roosen, Geschichte I, p. 77, II. p. 3. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)