

Item #15 in the Hildebrand Nachlass

Translated and Notes by Edwin D. Hoepfner 2004 Oct 02

London, 8th August 1788

My Dear Honourable Bartsch!

My negotiations in Brussels, St. Oma and Dunkeques with the Patriots [Note 1] who fled out of Holland caused me to travel from the last-named locality to England. I will remain here until further orders from the Prince [Note 2] and will in the meantime make arrangements to establish an Institution or Academy in the country, in which young Russians shall learn agriculture thoroughly and practically. Since my arrival here your letter to me of the 27th June has properly come to my hands. In accordance with your Orders of Procedure, which I received on date of 19 June from the General Headquarters of His Serene Highness on the Bug and details of which you can read at the Comptoir [Office] of Barstow & Elliott I advise you, if you have not left yet, to begin your departure without delay and travel on a neutral [Note 3] ship or overland to Riga via Liebau [Note 4].

I can not make sense of what you write me about Herrn von Sokolowsky, don't know how he can justify his talk against the interests of the Crown, still less comprehend what he has done with all the money. I could have assigned 10 times as much to him if he would first have accounted for the ?? 28,000 Rubel. It is also a puzzle to me what you write on the 27th June, that you could not receive your money even though you need it, for Messrs. Barstow & Elliott were already reporting to me on the 17 June that they had disbursed 800 Rubel to you! For God's sake deal honestly with me just as I always did with you!

I laugh about it that the slander mouths in Danzig are saying bad things about me, that tribe of knaves does not even spare the Empress herself. I never saw more impudent and malicious people than in Danzig.

My reason stands still about how the disorderly [or immoral] expelled seaman was able to lodge a complaint against you about his cloths, for not you, but Herrn Sokolowky shipped them off to Riga at my request. Have the judges in Danzig gone completely crazy in that they hold people accountable for something somebody else has done?

I want to hope that you have sent the girl, whom you mention, off to Riga with your wife and family.

I am surprised that you do not mention even one word about the letters of admonition of the Herrn Mennonite preacher from Amsterdam, that you have received them and what effect did they have.

I wish all good things for you and anticipate a detailed report from you soon, and also confirm that I have given you my best recommendation to Herrn Baron von Markloiosjy who is commander at Dubrovna in place of Herrn von Staal, and remain Your faithful subject

G. Trappe.

Note 1: Patriots – a Dutch Francophile political faction opposed to the party of the Stadtholder and the Orange Party. In a civil war between these factions England supported the Prussian intervention in autumn 1787 and ensured the victory of the Stadtholder (Orange faction). The Patriots were forced to flee from Holland and went to Northern France.

Note 2: Prince – His Serene Highness Prince Potemkin.

Note 3: War broke out between Sweden and Russia in June 1788 due to Swedish aggressive plans. Naval actions and Naval forces were the primary means of carrying war across the Baltic to Russia hence any Russian shipping was vulnerable to Swedish naval units. Sweden would probably not attack neutral shipping.

Note 4: Overland from Danzig to Riga via Liebau (Libau). The road from Memel to Liebau ran along the coast then turned east across Courland (Curonia) to the Russian boundary at Mitau (Yelgara) then to Riga. This appears to have been the best route, probably almost the only route and dated from the late 13th century (The Northern Crusade (Eric Christianson p. 140)).