

## **Report by Colony Director Brigonzy on Jacob Hoeppner**

St Petersburg Fond 283 Opis 29 Delo 161

Translated by Helen Ens 2019. Edited by GHP 20 June, 2025

This is the colony's presentation of July 8, 1797 concerning Jacob Hoeppner's behaviour.

/ Since all arrangements for the colony's establishment had been made, and to meet this goal no monetary savings were made,- Jacob Hoeppner tried, in a fraudulent manner, to gain monetarily gain for himself, stating that it would be to the advantage of the colony in the following manner:

1. As deputy for the colony he enacted another drama(?) when he returned from the late Duke Potemkin Tauricheski and told the colony that he had exchanged the colony's plan for settling in the Crimea with that of the late Duke's which would allow the whole colony to settle near a water which would be very advantageous for field and pasture land, for which he received a considerable amount of money as a sign of gratitude and many a farmer had to hand over 3 to 4 Rubel.

2. Since it was very necessary for the colony to have lumber ready upon their arrival, they sent a lumber commission up ahead of them which would look after this. As payment Jacob Hoeppner received 114 Rubles but made no effort (lumber had not been secured in advance) but also caused the Crown and the Colony a great loss by accepting via bribery poor quality lumber from the deliverers and even accepted tar and vinegar which was receipted as lumber.

3. In order to nurture his self-serving motives he claimed that he should represent the Colony in all affairs with the government and that it would not accept anyone but himself and without his help any petitions of the colony would be fruitless. To achieve this he influenced the colony not to obey Sir Major von Essen [ add note ] whom the government had appointed as the Director of the Colony. This Major von Essen, Hoeppner claimed, knew very little or nothing about the colony and had no contact with it. Many believed his arguments since they did not understand the justice system and knew of no circumstance until the Major showed his expense list.

Hoeppner was rewarded richly causing sacrificial giving by members of the colony, payments which Hoeppner would claim in advance. Still he failed to do the promised negotiations and would give reports (which later proved to be false) that the privileges and conditions promised the colony and the help they would receive were all cancelled.

4. When at first the monies from the High Crown came down they were distributed unevenly by Hoeppner and all the calculations done with so much care were wilfully confused.

5. As the false actions of J. Hoeppner increased there were embarrassing consequences when disobedience of members were visible, so that two bishops from Germany [West Prussia], Cornelius Regier and [Cornelius] Warkentin, had to come and bring order into existing circumstances. At an assembly J. Hoeppner with tears of repentance admitted to his wrong doing and promised to be above board in the future. But this promise did not last long. When Sir Director Brackel did business with Hoeppner his promises of improving his behaviour and refrain from wrong doing were forgotten and it got to the point where the honest farmers were abused.

Johann Brigonzy  
Director of the Colonies

