

Correspondence between the Dutch and Prussian Mennonite Congregations 1600 – 1800

Collected, Organized and Edited by

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The purpose of this project is to make good quality colour images of the original Dutch and German language correspondence together with English translations available to researchers.

By the 1600s persecution of Anabaptists in the Netherlands had stopped and there was essentially no more immigration from the Netherlands to the region known as Prussia. There was, however, some movement back and forth, mainly of Mennonite merchants and businessmen. In addition, there were those who travelled to the Netherlands in order to be baptized into one of the Dutch mother churches and returned soon after.

By the 1700s the Dutch Mennonites had become quite wealthy relative to their Prussian brethren. At the same time, the Prussian Mennonites were suffering from the devastations of several wars and frequent large-scale flooding of the Vistula River. The Prussians frequently turned to their Dutch brethren for financial aid. Although the majority of the correspondence is related to aid requested by the Prussian Mennonites, there are also letters requesting advice on church matters. The correspondence related to this is covered in several hundred letters found in Fond [565](#) of the Amsterdam archives in the collection “*Archief van de Doopsgezinde Gemeenten*”.

This is an open-ended project which will depend on funding and the availabilities of the translator and editor/organizer who both have other commitments. The total collection contains about 2,300 letters, of which about 400 are related to this project. It is expected that this project will take several years to locate, collect, translate, and post all of the relevant correspondence.

The first part of this project was funded by the [Plett Foundation](#). The transcriptions and translations of the letters below were funded by the Plett Foundation. All other translations were funded by me.

A. Letters related to the expulsion of Mennonites from East Prussia, the extortion by the Bishop of Culm and the Russian invasion during the War of Polish Succession:

Note for those reading the translations of Dutch letters:

The reader should realize that the translations are taken from handwritten letters from the 1730s and 1740s. Those originals written by the Dutch Mennonites were written in standard Old Dutch. Those written by the Prussian Mennonites were written in a mixture of Dutch, Plattdeutsch and German, and were often so poorly written as to be nearly incomprehensible, even to a present-day translator with expertise in German, Plattdeutsch and the Old Dutch languages.

- 1) All comments and insertions by the translator and editor are in square brackets.
- 2) All location names have been converted from their Dutch versions to spellings known to Mennonite historians and genealogists (using the standardized spellings employed in the GRANDMA database).
- 3) Surnames of individual Mennonites are given in bold.

1. [A1596 – 9 Sep 1732 letter from Jacob Isaac and Hans Voth of Dorposch.](#)
2. [A1597 – 13 Sep 1732 letter from Gabriel Franz, Peter Dirks, Isaac Gertz and Heinrich Nickel.](#)
3. [A1598 – 24 Sep 1732 letter from Peter Becker Ziegenfluss.](#)
4. [A1599 – 27 Sep 1732 internal letter regarding the Bishop of Culm.](#)
5. [A1088 – 17 Oct 1732 letter from Alle Dirks regarding problems with Bishop of Culm.](#)
6. [A1090 – 15 Nov 1732 letter from Alle Dirks to CBN about families in Kleinsee.](#)
7. [A1600 – 30 Mar 1733 letter from Gabriel Farnz and Heinrich Nickel of Schoensee.](#)
8. [A1609 – 31 Mar 1733 letter from Hans Ecker\(t\) to his daughter.](#)
9. [A1603 – 21 Apr 1733 letter from Jacob Isaac and Hans Voth of Dorposch.](#)
10. [A1601 – 30 Apr 1733 internal letter from Jan van Hoek about payments.](#)
11. [A1594 – 13 Jun 1733 letter from Jacob Isaac and Hans Voth of Doposch.](#)
12. [A1610 – 6 Jun 1733 letter from Peter Dirks regarding Peter Becker's group.](#)
13. [A1613 – 12 Sep 1733 letter by Jan van Hoek regarding Isaac Sperling and Hans Ecker\(t\).](#)
14. [A1614 – 26 Sep 1733 letter from Peter Dirks, Heinrich Nickel and Gabriel Franz.](#)
15. [A1234 – 16 oct 1734 letter from Hans Ecker\(t\).](#)
16. [A1623 – 6 Jun 1735 letter from Isaac Stobbe of the Danzig area.](#)
- 17a. [A1615 – 26 Oct 1734 letter from Danzig Frisian leadership.](#)
- 17b. [HamburgArchives521-5_203 Bd. 1 p24 – 14 Dec 1734 from Jan van Hoek.](#)
18. [1616 – 30 Oct 1734 letter from widow Anna Vossu in Danzig.](#)

19. [A1617 – 9 Dec 1734 letter from Flemish Mennonites in Hamburg/Altona.](#)
20. [A1618 – 14 Dec 1734 letter from Jan van Hoek.](#)
- 21a. [A1619 – 21 Feb 1735 letter from Danzig Frisian leadership.](#)
- 21b. [21b HamburgArchives1521-5_203 Bd1 p4 – 21 Feb 1735 letter from Danzig Frisian leadership.](#)
22. [A1620 – 2 Mar 1735 letter from Jan van Hoek regarding distribution of funds.](#)
23. [A1621 – 6 Mar 1735 letter from leadership of the Schoensee Old Groninger Flemish.](#)
24. [A1622 – 23 Apr 1735 mostly illegible letter from Danzig Mennonites.](#)
25. [A1657 – 7 May 1737 letter from Orlofferfelde congregation requesting aid.](#)

B. The Failed Colonization at Wageningen by A. van Gulik, Wageningen

Translated from “De Mislukte Kolonisatie te Wageningen”.

by Lydia Penner, den Haag, Netherlands for Glenn Penner, Winnipeg, Manitoba.

[\[Link here\]](#)

More information may be obtained from Glenn Penner at gpenner@ouguelph.ca .

An [example](#) taken from [another project](#).