

The Morgenster Morkels

Part 1: Introduction

Fourth generation **Willem MORKEL 1803 – 1876** of *Morgenster* married **Isabella Margaretha ZEEDERBERG 1809 – 1886** in 1830 (1). I have collected stories in four parts about this interesting branch of the family, the *Morgenster* Morkels.

Willem was the 3rd surviving son of third generation Daniel Johannes MORKEL 1764 – 1825 and the only child by his third wife, Sophia Alida BRINK 1768 – 1824. In our Genealogy (1) Willem is described as “Capitalist, Resident at *Morgenster*, Somerset West”. While we do not know how he made his money, he was clearly a man of means, and the family lived well, and became known as the “Royal Morkels”.



Morgenster.

Source: Hopkins (2 p29)

Willem would have bought the farm from its previous owner, his uncle, Philip Hendrik MORKEL 1760 – 1831. Much of our story is about the ten children of Willem and Isabella Margaretha and their offspring. Isabella Margaretha was the second eldest daughter of Roelof Abraham ZEEDERBERG (originally Zetterberg)(3) of Stromstad, Sweden. Roelof arrived at the Cape in 1798 and established himself by tendering for and salvaging a cargo of coffee from a shipwreck off the Cape of Good Hope (4). From this entrepreneurial beginning he became a successful businessman. Some of his descendants established and operated horse- and mule-drawn mail coaches throughout southern Africa. In the 1890s, encouraged by Cecil John Rhodes, the Zeederbergs ran coaches from Pietersburg (Polokwane) and Mafeking (Gaberone) to Bulawayo and Salisbury in Southern Rhodesia (5). This may explain how several of Willem and Isabella's grandchildren came to be active north of the Limpopo.

- a1 Philip MORKEL 1677 – 1735 x Catharina PASMEN 1691 - 1764
- b3 Willem MORKEL 1718 – 1788 xx Helena Catharina MALAN 1759 - 1825
- c6 Daniel Johannes MORKEL 1764 – 1825 xxx Sophia Alida BRINK 1768 - 1824
- d9 **Willem MORKEL 1803 - 1876 x Isabella Margaretha ZEEDERBERG**
 - e1 Daniel Johannes MORKEL 1832 - 1917 x Maria Adriana VAN DER BYL
 - e2 Roelof Abraham MORKEL 1833 – 1877 x Hendrina Maria Frederica DU PLESSIS. xx Johanna Elizabeth POTGIETER
 - e3 Margaret Elizabeth MORKEL 1835 – 1919 x Alexander VAN DER BYL
 - e4 Willem MORKEL 1837 – 1902 x Anna Christina DE WET 1842 - 1912
 - e5 Hendrik Johannes Louw MORKEL 1838 - ? x Johanna Maria Mollerstrom VAN BREDA
 - e6 Johannes Rudolph MORKEL 1840 – 1864
 - e7 Maria Dorothea MORKEL 1841 - ? x Capt Charles James BARNETT
 - e8 Pieter Gerhard Jacobus MORKEL 1844 – 1915 x Maria Susanna THEUNISSEN
 - e9 Sibella Margaretha MORKEL 1846 – 1902 x Captain George David PERRY R.N.
 - e10 Adriaan Johannes MORKEL 1850 - 1850

What I could find out about this family varies from a few paragraphs given below in this section [for those marked in blue above](#), to several pages of text, given in Part 2 (e3 Margaret Elizabeth and e8 Maria Dorothea), Part 3 (e1 Daniel Johannes) and Part 4 (e2 Roelof Abraham).

e4 **Dr. Willem MORKEL 1837 – 1902 x Anna Christina DE WET**

Dr. William MORKEL was a remarkable personality in the old Cape. As a child he was sent to school in Stellenbosch and had as his master a well-known Scottish *dominie*, Humphrey McLachlan. At 19 he proceeded overseas to the University of Edinburgh, and at the early age of 21 obtained his M.D. In the same year he was enrolled as a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in London and returned to the Cape. For nearly half a century thereafter Dr. Morkel practised his profession. (1, p48)

One of his first actions was to open up the mineral springs at Caledon which, though patronised earlier by farmers, had not been exploited by qualified medicos till then. Dr. Morkel followed the discoveries of diamonds late in the 1860s and became District Surgeon at Du Toit's Pan, after the founding of Kimberley, and later at Barkley West. Here he enjoyed the friendship of Luit. Governor Sir Richard Southey, of Griqualand West. Dr. Morkel owned the largest wagon, a "ship of the veld" built for trekking in the interior. It measured 23 feet long, 6 feet wide and 6 feet from floor to roof. (6, p125) In the early eighties he went prospecting on the new Barberton goldfields, and lived for a while in the Waterberg, Transvaal. He then returned to Somerset West where he established a large practice. Apart from his other interests, he was a keen racing man and a great friend of such Turf personalities as the Hon. John Faure, Charles Barry, John Manuel and others. He fell ill, was partly paralysed, and died on 24th March 1908. (1, p48)

Dr. Willem and his wife had 9 children. The 7th, **Daniel Gustavus MORKEL** 1876 – 1947 fought for the Boers in the Anglo Boer War of 1899 – 1902, and was a prisoner of war held in Bermuda by the British. Later he joined the South African Police at Pietersburg, Transvaal and fought in the Great War (WW I).

e5 Hendrik Johannes Louw MORKEL 1838 - ? x Johanna Maria Mollerstrom VAN BREDA.

This couple farmed at *Broadlands*, a farm near the other Morkel farms, south of *Die Bos/Onverwacht*. They had 14 children, of whom 6 boys and 4 girls reached adulthood. (1)



Hottentots Holland with The Strand in the foreground and the Morkel farms *Die Bos/Onverwacht* and *Broadlands* in the background.

Their 4th child, **Alexander Jacobus MORKEL 1871 - 1945**, married Constance DE VILLIERS and farmed at *Mt. Morkel*, Fouriesburg, O.F.S. The family has farmed in the area for generations and Mount Morkel, a red sandstone formation is a known feature of the landscape at Fouriesburg. They had one son and six daughters. The son, **Hendrik Johannes Louw MORKEL 1905 -?** married Elsabe de la Harpe MALAN, and their son, **Alexander Jacobus MORKEL** was born 10 February 1933 at *Mount Morkel*. (1) Elsabe's profile in the South African Woman's Who's Who of 1938, (9, p266) posted below, lists the farm as *Broadlands*, clearly named after the family farm near Somerset West.



MORKEL, Mrs. ELSABE, U.L.M., wife of Henry J. Morkel, son of Alec Morkel of Mt. Morkel, Fouriesburg, O.F.S. Daughter of the late Rev. J. H. Malan and his wife Mrs. v. d. Merwe of Oudtshoorn, Cape. Born at Wellington, Cape, Mrs. Morkel was educated at La Rochelle, Paarl, Cape, and studied music. Her hobbies and recreations are interior decoration, dancing, reading, music, dramatic art, tennis, gardening, hiking, riding and travel. Her address is "Broadlands," District Fouriesburg, O.F.S.



“Until the end of steam in 1987, the overnight passenger train on the Bethlehem line was pulled by 25NC 4-8-4's. Twenty years later we witnessed a perfect recreation of this 12 car train, passing Mount Morkel”. Photo taken 30 May 2007, Michael Allen. (7)

e8 Pieter Gerhard Jacobus MORKEL 1844 – 1915 x Maria Susanna THEUNISSEN 1846 – 1902. (1)

P.G.J. MORKEL was the second mayor of Somerset West and owner of *Oatlands*, formerly *Cloetenberg* from 1868 to 1903. (8, p47) The town of Somerset West was built on part of *Cloetenberg*. The couple had one son who died at 9 months and four daughters, Antoinette Maria 1871 – 1948, Sibella Margaretha 1873 – 1885, Helena Catharina 1875 - ? x Johann Adam Beijers, and Margaret Alexandra 1876 – 1936, x Pieter de Waal of *Happy Valley*, Helderberg.



PGJ MORKEL 1844 – 1915

Photo in Peggy Heap (8, p37)

e10 Adriaan Johannes Morkel 1880 - 1940 x Jacoba Elizabeth DE LA REY

Adriaan was born 15 March 1880 at *Morgenster* and christened on 25 April 1880 in Somerset West. He died 29 February 1940 at Lichtenburg Transvaal. His wife's profile appeared in the South African Woman's Who's Who of 1938. (9, p266)



**MORKEL, Mrs. JACOB
ELIZABETH DE LA REY**, wife of Adrian de la Rey Morkel who served with the rank of Captain in German East and West Africa and in Flanders during the Great War. Daughter of the late General Jacobus de la Rey and Jacoba Greef, daughter of the first Landdrost in Lichtenburg, Transvaal, also first white man in the district. Born at Manama, Lichtenburg, educated at Stellenbosch, C.P., and Girls' High

School, Pretoria. Her first husband was Benedictus Johannes Krige of Stellenbosch, C.P. Has two sons Jacobus Hercules Delarey Krige and Louis Benedictus Johannes Krige. On March 8th 1938 she was appointed Hon. Colonel to the de la Rey Regiment named after her late father and is the only South African woman to have received this distinction. Is interested in all local welfare and charitable work. Favourite recreations are gardening and home crafts. Her address is Elandsfontein Farm, Lichtenburg, Transvaal.

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Sources:

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2. H.C.Hopkins, 1969. *Die Ned.Geref. Gemeente Somerset-Wes*
3. <http://familytreemaker.genealogy.com/users/d/u/p/Amanda-M-Du-plessis/WEBSITE-0001/UHP-0004.html>
4. <http://archiver.rootsweb.ancestry.com/th/read/SOUTH-AFRICA-EASTERN-CAPE/2009-04/1239006365>
5. <http://www.memoriesofrhodesia.com/pages/newsletter/memorylane/memorylane0309.html>
6. Lawrence Green 1949. *In the Land of the Afternoon*. Howard B. Timmins. Cape Town.
7. <http://www.railpictures.net/viewphoto.php?id=190825&nseq=1>
8. Peggy Heap. 1970. *The Story of Hottentots Holland*. A.A. Balkema. Cape Town.
9. *South African Woman's Who's Who*. 1938. Biographies Ltd. Johannesburg.