

Reading Between the Lines

Highlights

Philip did not come from Hamburg

They did not want to be found

Philip and Maria were friends with the Pasman sisters

Piet Snap Zyn Post

Origin of the Family Crest

Zeemans-Rust

The Mysterious Johannes Theodorus Morkel

The Lady Visits and the Hosts are absent

Were the side courts of the Dovecote used for cock-fighting?

Supplying the *Neptune* by boat rather than ox wagon?

Origin of the Morkel name

In compiling the family history, it sometimes made sense to read between the lines and make plausible inferences about what actually happened. Being a detective as well as a historian. They are scattered in our various articles and are drawn together in a four part series on this website. However, some are of limited interest to a general reader, thus the highlights are listed here.

Philip did not come from Hamburg (*Index 3*)

VOC Archives at The Hague, Netherlands, list both *Stamvader a1* Philip Morkel and his brother *a2* Willem coming from Hamburg, Germany. Philip's will drawn up in the 1730's also lists him as born there. As described in our article¹, research by a Hamburg archivist found no trace of them or any Morkels in Hamburg at that time. However, I did find Morkels in Germany. Using telephone directories, I located about 40 Morkel families, with hotspots in Hessen, north (Butzbach) and east (Brachtal) of Frankfurt. I made contact with Carsten Morkel of Butzbach who had researched his family line back to the 17th century. While we could not form a direct link, it is plausible that Philip and Willem came from Hessen.

They did not want to be found (*Index 3*)

Why did Philip and his brother Willem list Hamburg as place of their birth? It is possible that we could not find Philip (and Willem) because they did not want to be found. Trained as a gunner, Philip would have served as a soldier for a feudal lord and it is unlikely that permission to resign and travel would be granted. His only way out would be to 'disappear'. The VOC was the biggest employer in Europe at that time and had a recruitment office in Hamburg. I suspect few if any questions were asked in recruiting. Thus perhaps Philip (and later Willem) found their way to Hamburg and signed up to sail to distant lands. To cover his tracks he gave Hamburg as his place of birth, a town not controlled by a feudal lord. His actions were more likely to escape an oppressive system, rather than being criminal.

¹ Searching for Philip Morkel in 17th century Germany, Website and From Germany to the Cape Book p3

² Book, p7-8

Philip and Maria were friends with the Pasman sisters (*Index 5*)

Philip Morkel married Catharina Pasman within months of the death in 1713, of his first wife Maria Biebouw. While this might appear unseemly hasty, a wife for a widower with a small child was almost a necessity. The question was rather, how did Philip manage to find a wife so quickly, in a community where males outnumbered females by a considerable margin. Baptism records³ show that Philip and Maria knew the Pasman sisters quite well. The oldest Margaretha, was witness in 1710 for the baptism of their first child Elisabeth, while the youngest sister, Sibella, was witness in 1712 for the baptism of their second child, Willem. It is likely that Maria and the Pasman daughters were childhood friends in the small community of Stellenbosch. Maria Biebouw and Catharina Pasman were baptised within a year of each other and most likely played together as children.

Piet Snap Zyn Post (*Index 2*)

For about four years *Onverwacht* was called *Piet Snap zyn Post*⁴ which translates as Piet Snap's Post (farm). Who was Piet Snap, and why was the farm named after him? While this happened before Philip Morkel and his wife Catharina Pasman arrived on the property, it is nevertheless an interesting story and relevant to our family history.

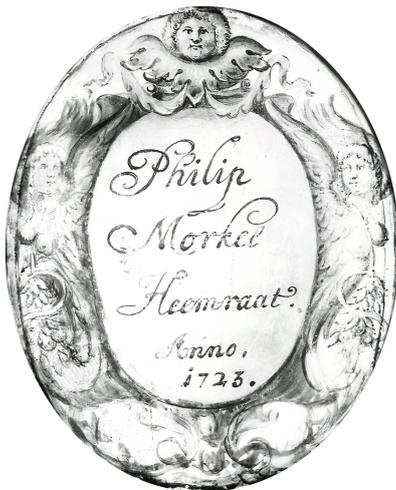
Jan Hartog, the Master Agriculturist (*baas landbouwer*) of the VOC gave the name *Onverwacht* to his allocated part of the Hottentots Holland *Buitepos*. He transferred it to his master, corrupt Governor W.A. van der Stel. When the governor was deposed, it was sold at auction in 1709 as one of five parcels of *Vergelegen*. Widow Elbertsz who purchased the property registered it as *Piet Snap Zyn Post*. four years later, in 1713, the farm was transferred to Sophia Pasman under the former name of *Onverwacht*.

³ Familysearch

⁴ Johannes van der Bijl, 2000. *Grond Eienaars van Stellenbosch 1693 - 1860*.

Why did widow Elbertsz name it *Piet Snap zyn Post*? We can only speculate. The only Piet Snap we could locate was a slave⁵ from Bengal, owned by Tobias Marquart. Tobias's brother, Jochem Marquart rented the *Buitepos* before it was allocated to Governor van der Stel. The *Buitepos* was extensive and the key farming activities would have been centred around the north eastern part, where the later farms *Vergelegen*, *Morgenster* and *Cloetenburg* were located. *Onverwacht* would have been at the perimeter of the estate and it is possible that Piet Snap was in charge as foreman there. It would have been convenient to refer to it as Piet Snap's post. Earlier on Jochem Marquart and Hendrik Elbertsz ran the *Buitepos* as joint tenants. Widow Elbertsz would have been familiar with the estate and it is possible that she knew Jochem and how he called the farm. This is the only plausible explanation why she called the farm Piet Snap's Post. It is speculation but the only reasonable one I can find, even if Piet Snap arrived only months before Jochem's lease expired.

Origin of the Family Crest⁶ (Index 4)



**Philip Morkel
Window-Pane
without Crest**



**Sibella Pasman
Crest on Window-
Pane**



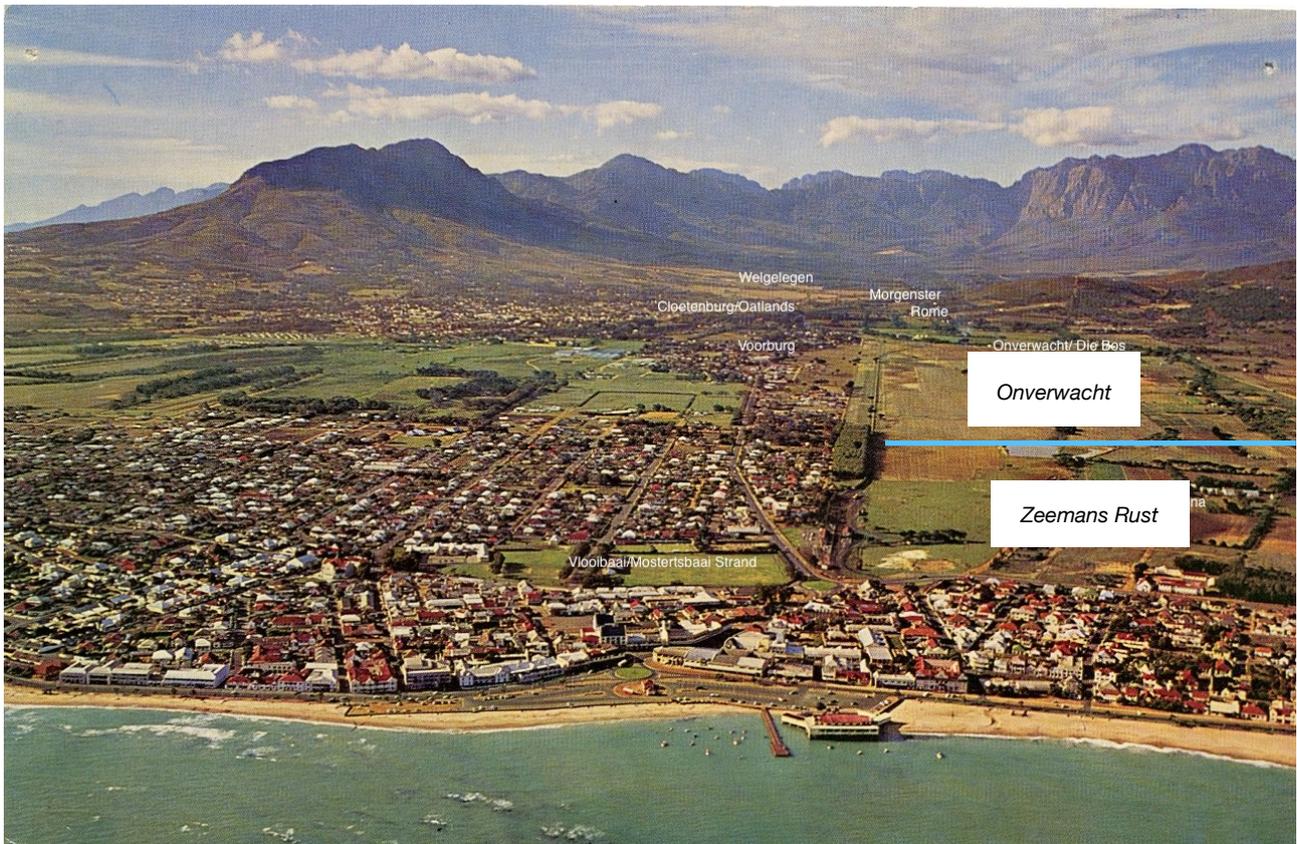
**Morkel Crest
at die Bos**

⁵ Delia Robertson. *The First Fifty Years*. <http://www.e-family.co.za/ffy/g15/p15670.htm> and <http://www.e-family.co.za/ffy/g7/p7123.htm>

⁶ Book p19; Website Family Crest

The Morkel family crest hangs on the wall at *Die Bos* and copies can be found in several Morkel families. Two window-panes salvaged from the second Stellenbosch church show that Philip did not have a crest at the time the church was built (1723) but his sister-in-law, Sibella Pasman did. Her crest was almost certainly constructed specifically for the window pane. It seems likely that Philip then commissioned a crest for himself. The shield of Philip's crest contains top right (circled) and bottom left quarters inspired by Sibella's crest (circled). In Holland, crests were quite common for middle class (*burgelijke*) families, not only aristocrats

Zeemans-Rust (*Index 3*)



**The likely location of *Zeemans-Rust* as an annexe of *Onverwacht*.
It became *The Lodge* and later *Altena***

In his will⁷, second generation *b4* Willem Morkel left the old family farm *Onverwacht* plus its annexe, the farm *Zeemans-Rust* to his third son *c6* Daniel Johannes Morkel. Apart from being in Willem's will, we cannot find *Zeemans-Rust* anywhere in Hottentots Holland⁸. Where was it? I have inferred that this farm, translated as Sailors-Rest, was *The Lodge*, later *Altena*, close to the sea. The Morkel family likely sold it during the 19th century when wine farms had an economic downturn. The new owner named it *The Lodge*. The family bought back the farm late in the 19th century. A relative, *e13* Philip Hendrik Morkel farmed there until my father, *g9* Daniel Johannes Morkel acquired it. He changed its name to *Altena*. While I have not found documented evidence, it is a plausible inference that *Zeemans-Rust* became *The Lodge/Altena*. The boundaries of the two farms are clearly linked. Located to the West with common boundaries and near the sea, it is also the logical site.

The Mysterious Johannes Theodorus Morkel⁹ (Index 3)

A Baptism Register show that Johannes Theodorus Morkel of Waveren (Tulbagh) and his wife had a son Petrus Johannes, baptised on 17 Dec 1797. This date place them very early in the family history, at the time of second generation *b4* Willem Morkel and his children.

Who were they, and how do they fit in the family? Why is Johannes Theodorus not listed in the family genealogy? Why did he live in Waveren (Tulbagh), which at that time, apart from Swellendam, was about as far away from *Onverwacht* as possible? If he were acknowledged as a son of Willem or any of his sons, he should have qualified as inheritor together with his siblings, Philip Hendrik, Willem, Daniel Johannes and Hercules. It is clear from Willem's will that was not so.

⁷ Website: The Estate of Willem Morkel 1718 -1788

⁸ There was a small part of *Vergelegen* called *Zeemanshoop*. See: Johannes van der Bijl, 2000 *Grondeienaars van Stellenbosch* p168. However, this was definitely not *Zeemans-Rust*.

⁹ Website: The Mysterious Johannes Theodorus Morkel

If we assume Johannes was between 20 and 30 years old when his son was baptised in 1797, he would have been born around 1767 to 1777. *b4* Willem Morkel and his family were the only Morkels at the Cape at that time. Johannes if born in 1767 would thus have been the son of *b4* Willem. If he were born around ten years later in 1777, one of Willem's three older sons, Philip Hendrik, Willem or perhaps even Daniel Johannes can be considered. Their ages at the start and end of the date range were as follows:

**Ages of father possibilities assuming Johannes Theodorus
was born between 1767 and 1777**

	Ages in 1767	Ages in 1777
b4 Willem Morkel 1718 - 1788	49	59
c4 Philip Hendrik Morkel 1760 -1831	7 (too young)	17
c5 Willem Morkel 1761 - 1821	6 (too young)	16
c6 Daniel Johannes Morkel 1764-1825	3 (too young)	13

Johannes Theodorus was most likely 'illegitimate', perhaps with a slave girl, and he might have been an embarrassment for the family. *b4* Willem Morkel was a wealthy prominent member of the community and church elder, and either he or his sons might have avoided being recognised as the father. However, Johannes Theodorus was special enough to the family to carry the Morkel surname. It remains a mystery. The growth of the mixed race population at the Cape shows that such births were not uncommon, and genealogies of that time reflected that this was often quite accepted. However, in this case this was not so.

The Lady Visits and the Hosts are absent¹⁰ (*Index 3*)

In May 1798 Lady Anne Barnard and her husband, Andrew Barnard travelled to the Overberg and Swellendam¹¹. On their way they stopped for midday meal at the Myburgh farm *Meerlust* and overnighted at *Onverwacht*, the Morkel farm. At *Meerlust* they found that *Mynheer* Myburgh (Phillipus Albertus Myburgh) was away from home, but *Mevrouw* (who did not speak English) gave them a very good dinner — mutton cutlets, chicken, roast lamb and pickled fish. It was excellent and the wine was very good. After this sumptuous meal — an impromptu one for they were not expected on that particular day — they went on to *Onverwacht*, the Morkels' farm (of c6 Daniel Johannes Morkel and his wife Maria Dorothea Morkel, née Louw). Here everyone was away, except a tutor of 'moralizing and philosophical turn of mind'. He was very kind and did his best for their comfort by providing them with featherbeds for the night and by lending them a team of oxen next morning. They needed the oxen to help pull their wagon over the difficult *Gantouw* pass over the Hottentots Holland mountains. Lady Anne also made a sketch of their host, the Tutor at *Onverwacht*. A number of questions arise from this somewhat innocuous account of the Barnards' travel.

- Did they really arrive unannounced? Were there no advance arrangements?
- Was the sumptuous meal at *Meerlust* impromptu or was it specially prepared for the visitors?
- Was the absence of both P.A. Myburgh at *Meerlust* and D.J. Morkel at *Onverwacht* coincidence or intended?
- Why was there a tutor at *Onverwacht*, when there were no children to teach? (The oldest child at the time was three years old). Who was the tutor?
- Was it normal for a tutor to provide overnight hospitality and on the following morning, loan a team of oxen for the trek over the mountain pass?

We do not know the answers, but there is some background to the visit, which can provide context.

¹⁰ Website: The Lady visits and the hosts are absent

¹¹ Dorothea Fairbridge, 1924, *Lady Anne Barnard at the Cape of Good Hope 1797 — 1802* p62 & 63. Clarendon Press, Oxford.

About five months earlier in November 1797, Andrew Barnard in his role of Colonial Secretary travelled to Stellenbosch twice to persuade a small group of about five *burgers* who held out signing a second Oath of Allegiance to the British King (George III). It was significantly different from the first Oath, which pledged support to the British as temporary custodians on behalf for the Dutch government (Prince Willem of *Oranje*) in exile in Britain. It was resented by some, particularly P.A. Myburgh, of *Meerlust*, and his cousins D.J. (of *Onverwacht*) and P.H. Morkel. After a report by the *Landdrost* at Stellenbosch that he encountered problems administering the Oath, Andrew Barnard, normally a decent and amiable person, had to cajole and threaten the recalcitrants to sign¹².

Although Barnard succeeded to get the oath signed, the governor, Earl Macartney, ordered a military presence on their farms. There were 22 dragoons stationed at *Meerlust* and 10 each at *Onverwacht*, and a few other farms within the Myburg-Morkel families. Macartney was determined to stamp out any Jacobin sympathies with the recent French Revolution. The dragoons would have been surprised and non-plussed when they were welcomed as guests by P.A. Myburgh. They in turn helped out on the farm — an amiable outcome for what was intended to be a display of British power and control. At *Meerlust* a finely carved coffee table is on display which the dragoons made as a gesture of thanks¹³.

Daniel Johannes Morkel at *Onverwacht* most likely followed his leader in extending hospitality to the dragoons. The punitive measure to station dragoons on their farms would have been in the minds of P.A. Myburgh and D.J. Morkel, when they learned that Andrew Barnard and his wife (and two others) were coming for a visit. They would have felt honour-bound to provide good hospitality but probably preferred to be absent for the actual visit. Whatever Lady Anne's private thoughts were, her biography gives no hint of a perceived snub.

¹² The most potent threat would have been the prospect of banishment, which would have stripped these landowners of their farms and livelihood.

¹³ Phillida Brooke Simons, 2003. *Meerlust. 300 Years of Hospitality*, Fernwood Press. p 63

Were the side courts of the Dovecote used for cock-fighting? (*Index 2*)

The main Cape Dutch building at *Onverwacht* is the dovecote with its neoclassical facade and baroque gables on the side courts. It has become a recognisable icon for the family. It was built around the early 1800s by third generation c6 Daniel Johannes Morkel. The one at *Onverwacht* has side enclosures or courts, not normally found in dovecotes. What were they used for? Certainly not for raising pigeons. According to Victor de Kock ¹⁴, they were used for cock-fighting. This pass-time was very popular amongst Malays, many of them slaves. The side courts would have been ideal arenas for that purpose. Walled off for privacy, each court had space for the two rival groups at either end, with the cocks fighting in the middle. It is unlikely that they were built for the pleasure of slaves — they probably made use of it once it had been built.

Was Daniel Johannes a cocking enthusiast himself? Possibly. He had close connections with his cousin P.A. Myburgh at *Meerlust*, who was his commanding officer in the dragoons. Also P.A.'s son was married to Daniel Johannes' daughter. The dove-cote at *Meerlust* also had side courts and was likely the model for the *Onverwacht* dovecote. If P.A. were into cock-fighting, he might have introduced Daniel Johannes to the 'sport'. It is the most plausible explanation for the side courts I could find.

Supplying the *Neptune* by boat rather than ox wagon? (*Index 3*)

The story about the *Neptune* and the family's distressing involvement is told in the Book and the website¹⁵.

In 1849 the British government attempted to transport convicts to the Cape. The local population was up in arms about this, and when the convict ship *Neptune* arrived in 1849 it faced a pledge by the local population and businesses and suppliers were under pressure not to have any dealing with it. Anyone who broke the pledge were publicly exposed and humiliated. The government desperately needed supplies otherwise the convicts and crew would starve.

¹⁴ De Kock, p88-89.

¹⁵ Website: Breaking the Pledge and Book Breaking the Pledge chapter 21

Colonel Robert Stanford of the farm *Gustrouw* (present day Gordons Bay) was persuaded to supply the *Neptune* with food and he enlisted the help of his neighbour Hendrik Johannes Morkel of *Onverwacht*. They subsequently experienced merciless hounding and ostracism for breaking the pledge.



Compare the land and sea routes to transport provisions from the Gustrouw farm near Gordons Bay to the Neptune anchored off Simonstown. Oxwagons using the land route had to skirt around the sandy Cape Flats and go via Hardekraaltjie (Bellville) and then proceed down the Cape Peninsula, dodging angry protestors. The sea route is direct.

Accounts of the incident talked of using wagons¹⁶ to convey the produce to the ship. Ox wagons were slow and cumbersome and had to go through the loose sand of the Cape Flats suffering blockades and harassment along the way. They passed Hardekraaltjie (Bellville) near Cape Town, then along the Peninsula to Simonstown and finally by boat to the ship. Although it is not in the articles available, Hennie Morkel and I feel it is likely that Col. Stanford used boats rather than ox wagons to supply the *Neptune*. He already supplied markets in Cape Town

¹⁶ Peggy Heap, 1970, *The story of Hottentots Holland*. p54

by boat with produce from his farms at Stanford in the *Overberg*¹⁷ and presumably from his farm *Gustrouw* farm at Gordons Bay. A glance at the map shows the difference. Supplying the ship with 282 convicts on board plus their guards and crew for five months must have been a formidable task. As the months passed, the anti-convict agitation became more intense and they also refused supplies to the rest of the navy at Simonstown as well as the Governor and senior officials. These people did not starve, so alternate supply routes were available and used.

Leander Starr Jameson sought out Maria Freislich Morkel (*Index 3*)

e13 Philip Hendrik Johannes Morkel (1841—1910) and his wife Maria Goudrica neé Freislich (1846—1937) lived on *The Lodge*, a portion of the old Morkel farm *Die Bos.* Maria Freislich Morkel was loved for her gentle and generous nature.

A story¹⁸ in the family has that she provided food and shelter for the notorious Leander Starr Jameson who was hiding in the bush at *The Lodge*. From a base in Rhodesia, Jameson led a failed raid seeking to topple President Kruger's government in the Transvaal in 1895. He was apprehended and delivered to the British Colonial Government in Cape Town for trial and sentencing. He escaped custody and was hiding near the Strand when Maria took pity and gave him food and shelter. The Transvaal Morkel family understandably had a less benign view of the incident. Jameson was the enemy and the horrors of the war that followed bore them out.

Why was Jameson at the Strand and hiding at *The Lodge*? There were hardly any bushes to hide in. Trees on the well cultivated farm were sparse and were mainly for windbreaks along paddock fences. It is likely that Jameson was at *The Lodge* not by chance or to hide, but that he actively sought out the Morkel family. Their son, Carolus Morkel had been a member of the Rand Pioneers Column in 1890¹⁹. The Pioneers was a battalion organised by Cecil John Rhodes to operate in Mashonaland which became Southern Rhodesia. Jameson

¹⁷ S.J. du Toit. *Stanford Stories 1729 to 1995*. Stanford Tourism Bureau

¹⁸ Website; P.H.J Morkel and MG Freislich.

¹⁹ P.W. Morkel 1961, *The Morkels. Family History and Family Tree*. Published privately. p47a

was a leader of the Pioneers and most likely got to know Carolus and about his parents at *The Lodge*. He would have used this connection when he needed help.

Origin of the Morkel name (*Index 3*)

Descendants of *stamvader* Philip Morkel, the family in South Africa spell their name Morkel. It is also the most common spelling of the name in Germany and other countries such as the USA and Russia. There are also variations, for example, Morckel, Morkell, Morchel and Morgel, as well as Merkel and Markle²⁰.

It is possible that our name derived from the Morel mushroom, Morchel in German and Morkel in Danish. However further study indicated another more likely possibility. The research of Melchior²¹ shows that at least in Butzbach, Morkel in the early days were Markel, and it changed to the current name in 1535 with a first listing of Emmerich Morkel.

Morkel, Markel, Markwardt and Markholt are variations of the same root. In our book²² I assumed that mark referred to market, but it is wrong. The German for market is Markt, while the difference of one letter seems small, it is significant. An etymological dictionary²³ indicates that mark refers instead to boundary or borderlands (Marches). Thus Markel was more likely a stranger, someone from the border regions.

²⁰ Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany and Meghan Markle, married to Prince Harry

²¹ Erich Melchior, Butzbacher Familie: Marckel (Markel und Morckel), Hessische Familienkunde, Band 16, 1982 -1983

²² Morkel Book p249

²³ <https://www.etymonline.com/word/march> March (noun) "boundary," late 13c. (in reference to the borderlands beside Wales, rendering Old English *Mercia*), from Old French *marche* "boundary, frontier," from Frankish **marka* or some other Germanic source (compare Old High German *marchon* "to mark out, delimit," German *Mark* "boundary;"