

Commemorative family medals during the DEIC period

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There is an interesting phenomenon found in previous centuries in the Netherlands and areas within her sway of influence. This was the custom of presenting commemorative medals¹ (familiepenningen) to record the highlights of family life for posterity. These medals were made to mark important family events, from the cradle to the grave.² The majority of extant medals relate to weddings and wedding anniversaries. A fairly large number were presented as gifts for family and friends who participated in the last rites of a loved one.³ The practice seems to have been

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1. H. LINECAR, *Coin & Medal collecting for pleasure and profit*. (Hamlyn, London, 1971), p. 76. "As will be understood from its title, the commemorative medal is struck to mark some event of historical importance. It is not the same as the medal which is awarded for 'doing one's bit' in a war. This type of medal is more properly known as a decoration." Howard Linecar was a member of the numismatic company of Spink & Son, London.
 2. ANON., *Catalogus der genealogisch-heraldische tentoonstelling in het raadsgebouw der gemeente 's-Gravenhage Mei 1933*, p. 119. "Onder familiepenningen worden verstaan die penningen, die vervaardig zijn ter gelegenheid van gebeurtenissen in het familieleven van de wieg tot de graf ..."
 3. J.W. FREDERIKS, [*Nederlandsche*] *Penningen*. (Allert de Lange, Amsterdam, 1947) p. 89; ANON., *Catalogus der genealogisch-heraldische ...*, p.121 "De begrafenispenningen hadden tot doel om, inplaats van geld aan de dragers van het lijk, meestal burens en nabestaanden, te worden vereerd."

typically Dutch, with a more limited usage in the protestant cities of Northern Germany.⁴

These commemorative medals fall into three major categories:

Baptismal and birth medals

Betrothal and wedding medals (including wedding anniversaries)

Death and burial medals.

There are some minor categories, which include friendship and birthday medals. There is even a known instance of a medal made to mark a divorce.⁵ A study of these medals is of importance far beyond the closed circle of medal collectors. Art historians, iconographers, genealogists and heralds can all benefit from such investigation. The art historian can observe changes in style and symbolism over time. Portraits and busts are of interest to the iconographers. Genealogical information concerning births, marriages and deaths can be found. For the student of heraldry there is a wealth of coats of arms in the styles of the various periods.⁶ The high incidence of coats of arms on the medals evinces the Dutch love of heraldry.

There is a close correlation between numismatics and heraldry, similar to the relationship between heraldry and sigillography. In both cases, one science reflects and supports the other. Coins and medals are often a source of heraldic information. It is not unusual to find coats of arms on medallions in cases where there are no pertinent seals for the period. In return numismatics benefits from the science of heraldry.⁷ The presence of a coat of arms can greatly facilitate the task of dating and identifying coins and medallions.

Doctor Bemolt van Loghum Slaterus in his *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813* catalogued nearly sixteen hundred medals from the period 1573 - 1813. Several of these had a direct or indirect link with the period of Dutch Administration at the Cape 1652 – 1795. For example, there was a medal struck to mark the death, in the East Indies on 18 January 1677 of Joan van Riebeeck, the first Commander of the Cape of Good Hope.⁸

4. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, (Zutphen: Walberg Pers, Utrecht, Universiteitsmuseum), p. 7.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 157. Medal 1102. This was struck to mark the divorce of Meinard Uytwerf and Johanna Margaretha Booge on 6th December 1754.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 7; ANON., *Catalogus der genealogisch-heraldische ...*, p. 119.

7. ANON., *Catalogus der genealogisch-heraldische ...*, p. 119. The anonymous author of the Hague exhibition catalogue states “treffende erkenning heeft gevonden in het aardige werkje: *Wappenbüchlein zur Erklärung von einfachen und zusammengesetzten Schilden etc. hauptsächlich auch solcher auf Münzen, door Otto Friedrich Kautsch* (Leipzig, 1903).”

8. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, Medal 298, p. 67. This is engraved with the van Riebeeck arms. There is no recorded medal for his first wife Maria de la Quellerie (d.o. Ds Abraham Quevellerius and Maria du Bois), however there is a heraldic medal for a kinsman Abrah[am] Quevellerius, who died 29 January 1704. Medal 629, p. 103.



Figure 1 - Silver Pictorial Medal dated 1685 (source: Welz).

Welz mentions several general-, and illustrates two family medals from the Dutch period in his work on *Cape silver and silversmiths*. However, he comments that the

“existence of a medal bearing a Cape maker’s mark has not yet been established.”⁹ One of the medals in the collection of the S.A. Cultural History Museum in Cape Town, “was probably made to commemorate the wedding of Coenraad Visser and Catharina Everts at the Cape on 5 August 1685.” One side has pictorial engravings, legends, a monogram and the year 1685. The other has allegorical emblems and further inscriptions. The source of this attribution seems to have been D. Bax who, after searching the Cape marriage registers of the period for couples with the relevant initials found in the monogram, came to the conclusion that they were the most likely couple.¹⁰

The second medal was that marking the death of Joan Bax, ‘genaamt van Heerentals’, who died 29 June and was buried in Cape Town on 4 July 1678.¹¹

Figure 2) This medal has the arms of Bax on the one side with a legend detailing the event on the other. It is interesting to note that the coat of arms of Bax does not appear in any of the heraldic literature in South Africa. Cornelis Pama wrote an article in *Historia* about the coats of arms of the Commanders, Governors and Commissioners-General at the Cape.¹² It was written to explain a stained glass window in the building housing the offices of the Dutch Consul General in Cape Town. This window depicted the shields of arms of all those covered by the title and it seems likely that Pama also undertook the heraldic research. Pama gave him as “Johan Bax. Goewerneur 1676-1678. Wapen onbekend.”¹³ In a footnote he mentioned that there were several families with this name in the Netherlands, with different arms. However, he could not establish to which of these families the Governor belonged. The writer saw this window in September 1998 and the arms of Bax now appear featuring only the three gourds, which appear in the first quarter of the arms that follow. The arms on the medal are: *Quarterly 1st and 4th three gourds, 2nd and 3rd per fess in chief a lion passant and in base three barrulets wavy; on an inescutcheon per fess a lion passant in chief. Above the shield is a Count’s coronet.*

9. S. WELZ, *Cape silver & silversmiths : the work of silversmiths at the Cape of Good Hope, from late 17th to mid 19th century: early problems, training, output, marking, quality: with a definitive list of smiths and their marks* (A.E. Balkema, Cape Town, 1976), p. 73.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 79; D. Bax, *Het oudste Kaapse zilver 1669-1751* in *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde*, Nieuwe reeks, 86 (B.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgewers Maatschappij, Amsterdam, 1974), pp. 33-51.

11. S. WELZ, *Cape silver & silversmiths : the work of silversmiths at the Cape of Good Hope, from late 17th to mid 19th century: early problems, training, output, marking, quality: with a definitive list of smiths and their marks*, p. 81. Welz does not give the source of this illustration. Bemolt van Loghum Slaterus states that an example of this unmarked medal (90 x 110 mm) is in the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam, Medal 321, p. 69. He incorrectly gives part of the inscription as ‘generaal van Heerentals’.

12. C. PAMA, ‘Die wapens van die Kommandeurs, Goewerneurs en Kommissarisse-Generaal aan die Kaap, 1652-1806’. *Historia*, 3(3) 1958, p. 8.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 8.

Historia, 45(2), November 2000, pp. 438-50.

No special significance should be seen in this as coronets were assumed at will. “By 1789 [the Comte de] Mirabeau complained that, as a true gentleman, he had to have a ducal coronet engraved on his signet ring, since any commoner used a count's coronet.”¹⁴

At the age of 32, Bax married Aletta Hinloopen, daughter of the Merchant-Prince Jacob Frans Hinloopen. “Appropriate to his elevated status as the consort of a Hinloopen {sic}, he had soon after the wedding added the suffix ‘Van Herenthals’ {sic} to his own good name of Bax which made it even sound better than that of his wife and, moreover, was a tribute to his father Maurits who, while settled in s’Hertogenbosch at the time of Johan’s birth, actually hailed from Herenthals in Flanders where his family had occupied a respected social position.”¹⁵

Another medal with a definite Cape connection is that of Cornelia Six who died unmarried there 21 May 1681.¹⁶ She was the sister-in-law of Simon van der Stel who arrived at the Cape in 1679. Her position in his household at the Cape is unknown (her sister Johanna Jacoba did not accompany her husband and children to the Cape and it seems that ‘Governor’ Simon never sent her any money).¹⁷ This medal has Cornelia’s portrait on one side.¹⁸ **(Figure 3)** Dr Anna Boeseken found a genealogy in the Library of the University of Amsterdam. In the genealogical description of the families Six and van der Stel, written by Jan Six, there was a depiction of a silver medallion, with a poorly drawn portrait of Cornelia Six. One saw a stout woman with long earrings and a necklace that drew more attention than the face with its friendly, if unattractive, features. “Definitely not the work of an artist.” Further it stated that she was unmarried when she died.¹⁹ The quartered arms of Six and Hinloopen appear on the other side of the medal.

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14. F. VAN VELDE, ‘The Right to bear arms.’ Website: <http://www.heraldica.org/topics/right.htm>. The Comte de Mirabeau was a French revolutionary statesman who was elected president of the French National Assembly in 1791, but died shortly afterwards.
 15. H.W.J. PICARD, *Masters of the castle : a portrait gallery of the Dutch commanders and governors of the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1795, 1803-1806*, (C. Struik, Cape Town, 1972), p. 74.
 16. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, Medal 353, p. 73.
 17. A.J. Boëseken, *Simon van der Stel en sy kinders*, (Tafelberg, Kaapstad, 1964), pp. 15-29.
 18. With some commemorative medals it is difficult to establish which side is the obverse and which is the reverse. Cornelia was the 4th child of Willem Six and Cathalina {sic} Hinloopen. Her ‘blue sarcophagus’, mentioned by Francois Valentyn, has subsequently disappeared. Mentioned in A.J. Boeseken, *Simon van der Stel en sy kinders*. p. 221. NOTE: Valentyn described the interior of the Groote Kerk circa 1726 and mentions that Joan Bax also had a blue sarcophagus. F. Valentyn, *Description of the Cape of Good Hope with the matters concerning it, Amsterdam 1726* (Raidt, E.H. [et al.] Van Riebeeck Society (Series) ; 2nd ser., no. 2(4). Cape Town, 1971), pp. 90-1.
 19. A.J. Boeseken, *Simon van der Stel en sy kinders*. p. 224. Note: Marital status is not indicated, Cornelia is referred to as “Vrouw Six” and not Juffrouw Six. She must have been between 33 and 35 when she died; she was younger than Johanna Jacoba born 1645, had a younger sister and their father died in 1652.

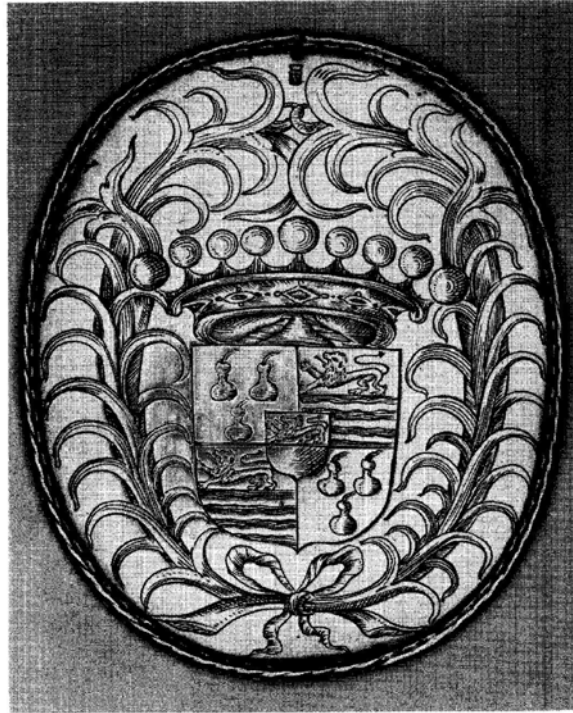


Figure 2 - Medal commemorating the death of Joan Bax (Source: Welz).

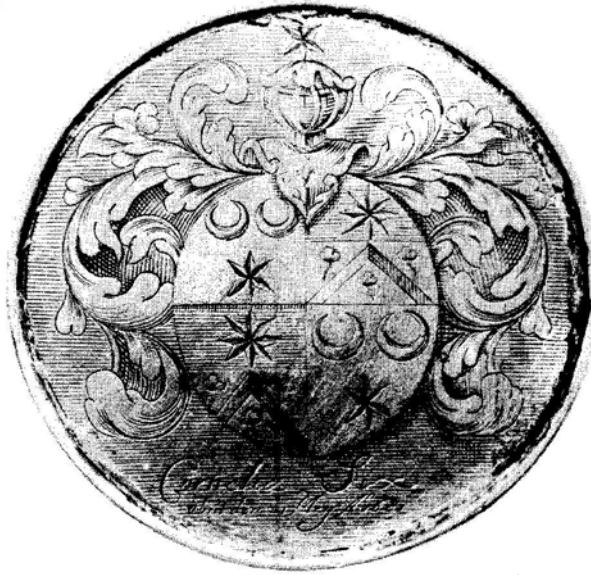


Figure 3 - Medal commemorating the death of Cornelia Six (Source: Bemolt van Loghum Slaterus) Unmarked. Size: 71 mm.

Rietstap gives two variants of the arms of Hinlopen {sic} of Amsterdam. The first is: Azure, a chevron Or, between three trefoils Argent; on a chief Gules an estoile Or. The second is: Quarterly, 1st Gules, an estoile Or; 2nd Azure, a decrescent Argent; 3rd Azure, a chevron Or, between three trefoils Argent; 4th Or, three pallets Sable.²⁰ The latter represent Sara Hinloopen's arms on the medal commemorating

20. J.B. RIETSTAP, *Armorial Général, I*, (Second edition, G.R. van Goor Zonen, Gouda, n.d.), p. 956.

her Golden Wedding Anniversary with Arendt van der Waeyen on 15 May 1760.²¹ (**Figure 4**) On the medal of Cornelia Six the arms are: Quarterly 1st & 4th Azure, two crescents in chief and an estoile in base, all Argent; 2nd & 3rd Per fess Gules and Azure, in chief an estoile Or, in base a chevron Or between three trefoils Argent. The arms in the first and fourth quarters are those of the family Six.²² Those in the second and third quarters are similar to the first variant of the arms of Hinloopen given above. Here the chief is extended to the fess line and the arms are thus the dexter side of the second variant.



Figure 4 - Medal commemorating the Golden Wedding of Arendt van der Waeyen & Sara Hinloopen (Source: Bemolt van Loghum Slaterus) M. Holtzhey & J.G. Holtzhey. Size: 42 mm.

Commemorative medals were popular with the Hinloopen and Six families.²³ It was through these two families that Joan Bax and Simon van der Stel were related. They were married to first cousins. Bax married Aletta Hinloopen and van der Stel married Johanna Jacoba Six.²⁴ Mistress Bax's father was Frans Jacobus Hinloopen the brother of Cathalina Hinloopen, who married Willem Six.²⁵ The only known Van der Stel medal is that for Hillegonda Cranendonk who died 18 November 1708. She was the wife of Adriaan van der Stel, 2nd son of Simon and Johanna Jacoba

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21. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, Medal 1167 p. 164.
 22. J.B. RIETSTAP, *Armorial Général*. Volume 2, p. 784.
 23. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, Medal 130, p. 49 for Sara Hinloopen, died 5 April 1658; Medal 950 p. 139 for Neeltje Hinloopen, died 14 December 1740; Medal 972, p. 142 for Gerard Hinloopen, died 23 April 1743; Medal 1129 p. 160 for the Golden Wedding of Gerrit Hooft and Hester Hinloopen; Medal 277, p. 64 for Daniel Six, died Batavia 5 November 1674.
 24. H.W.J. PICARD, *Masters of the castle : a portrait gallery of the Dutch commanders and governors of the Cape of Good Hope, 1652-1795, 1803-1806*, pp. 86-87. Picard incorrectly refers to Bax as the uncle of Johanna. He considers possible reasons why she did not accompany her husband to the Cape.
 25. A.J. Boeseken, *Simon van der Stel en sy kinders*. 'Fragment-genealogie van Johanna Jacoba Six', p. 269.

Historia, 45(2), November 2000, pp. 438-50.

Six.²⁶ Adriaan farmed at the Cape before entering the service of the DEIC at the Cape, eventually becoming Councillor for India and Governor of Amboina.

Although Welz stated that no medal bearing a Cape maker's mark had then yet been established, it is possible that a Cape silversmith made both the Bax and Six medals. There are many points of similarity in the engraving of the legends.²⁷ The question arises about who might have commissioned these medals and perhaps also two blue sarcophagi mentioned by Valentyn.²⁸ The Van der Stels only arrived in 1679. It is not known how long the widow Bax, née Hinloopen, remained at the Cape. Her family had a tradition of medals. If she was still there in 1681 then she would seem to be the most likely candidate. What had been done for her husband was also done for her cousin. Was the second sarcophagus intended for her?

There are commemorative medals for individuals who may have been related to Cape gubernatorial families. Amongst these appear Swellengrebel, Van Aerssen and Van der Graaf[f].²⁹ There are also medals for DEIC officials (or their spouses) that spent some time at the Cape. There are examples of four heraldic medals commemorating the deaths of the two wives of Rycklof van Goens as well as medals commemorating the deaths of two governors-general of the East Indies, namely Joan Maetsuycker and Johannes Camphuijs.³⁰ Other examples exist that could have had a Cape connection but where insufficient genealogical data was available.

It was previously mentioned that commemorative medals are of value to more people than just to medal collectors. One medal in *Nederlandse familiepenningen* was most useful in resolving an uniquely South African heraldic problem. This is the medal struck for the Silver wedding anniversary on 17 June 1729 of Egidius van den Bempden and Aegie Hooft.³¹ (

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26. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, Medal 662, p. 107 records that this medal has a coat of arms on one side with the all-seeing eye of God on the other.
 27. A medal presented to Isbrand Goske – of about the same vintage also bears comparison.
 28. See also footnote 18.
 29. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, Medal 134, p. 49 for Anna Swellengrebel died 18 February 1659; Medal 821, p. 125 commemorates the Golden Wedding on 13 November 1728 of Cornelis van Aerssen & Maria Pauw (with portraits and coats of arms); Medal 1233, p. 172 commemorates the Golden Wedding on 23 July 1768 of Hendrik van der Graaf & Adriana de Labarre.
 30. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, Medal 198, p. 56 for Jacomina Rosegaard, who died 3 January 1667 as 1st wife of Rycklof van Goens; Medal 213, p. 58 for Esther de Solemne, who died 22 June 1668 as 2nd wife of van Goens; Medal 316, p. 69 for Joan Maetsuycker, who died 4 January 1678; Medal 537, p. 93, for Johannes Camphuijs, who died 18 July 1695.
 31. A.J. BEMOLT VAN LOGHUM SLATERUS, *Nederlandse familiepenningen tot 1813*, Medal 824, p. 125.

Figure 5) The arms of van den Bempden appear in the Bell-Krynauw collection in the South African Library, Cape Town (Accession MSB69).³² The only connection with the Cape is that these arms appeared with seven others on what was presumably the lost tomb or hatchment of Jan Willem Cloppenburg. Bell must have taken his information from some funerary monument as he gives the dates as “Natus 27 Augt. 1714 Obiit 30 May 1770”.³³ He gives the blazon (verbal description) as: “*pppale {sic} gules & sable dexter a tower, and sinister 5 turrets, or, on a chief of the last a demi 2 headed eagle displayed of the 2nd*”. This would be *Party per pale Gules and Sable, dexter a tower and sinister 5 turrets, all Or; on a chief also Or a demi double-headed eagle displayed Sable*.³⁴ It would seem that Bell made his drawings from his notes and that when he came to draw the arms he omitted the top part with the eagle. (See Figure 6 -)



824

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32. The earliest known investigation into the state of heraldry in South Africa is the 19th century Bell-Krynauw collection. Charles Davidson Bell (1813-1882) laid the foundation by making drawings of the arms that he found on tombstones and hatchments in the old Groote Kerk in Cape Town (prior to being rebuilt) as well as other sources.
33. NATIONAL LIBRARY CAPE TOWN, Bell-Krynauw MS p. 3C: 1.
34. J.B. RIETSTAP, *Armorial Général*, I, p. 160 the arms of van den Bempden have the field ‘party per pale Gules and Azure’; This can also be seen in V. Rolland, *Armoiries des familles contenues dans l’Armorial général de J. B. Rietstap*, (6 volumes), (L’Institut Héraldique Universel, Paris, 1903-1926), plate CLXXIII. It is possible that the error derives from the monument, although the error may have arisen when Bell made his notes.

Figure 5 - Medal commemorating the Silver Wedding of Egidius van den Bempden & Aegie Hooft (Source: Bemolt van Loghum Slaterus).

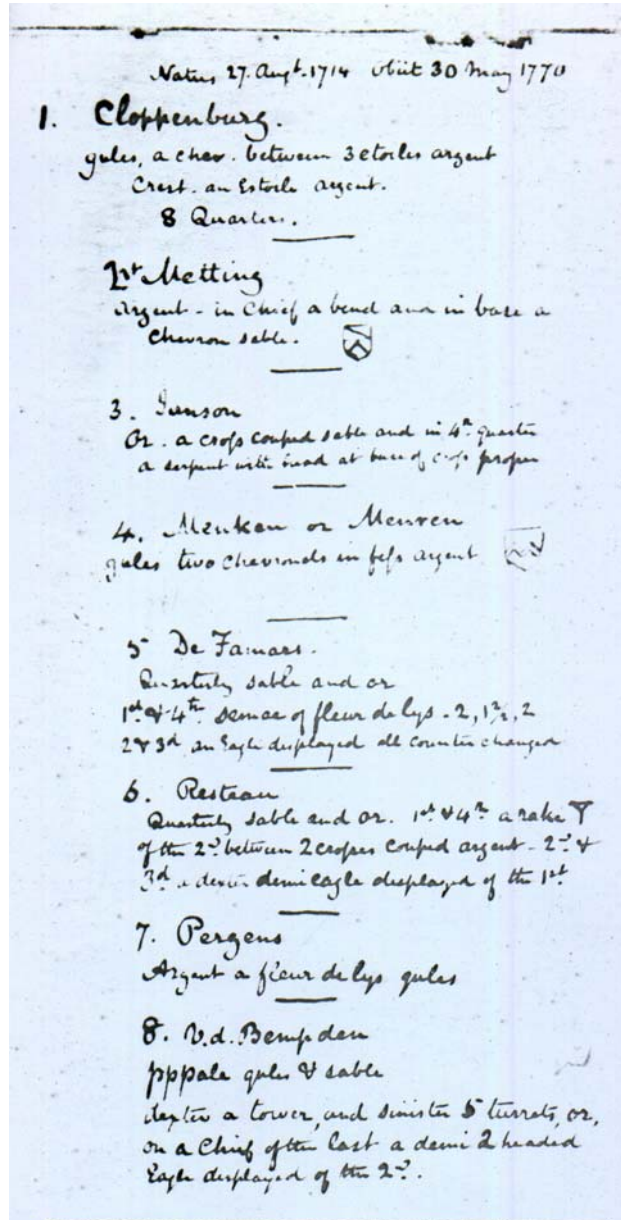


Figure 6 - Detail of folio 3C 1 recto of Bell's Notes (Source: Bell-Krynauw Collection).

When Pama came to write *Die wapens van die ou Afrikaanse families* he copied the mistake Bell made in the drawing. The coat of arms of Van den Bempden was thus reduced by a third.³⁵ However, it is obvious that Pama worked with Bell's blazons

35. C. PAMA, *Die wapens van die ou Afrikaanse families: 'n vergelykende historiese studie van die Bell-Krynauw-versameling in die S.A. Biblioteek, die seëls van die Kaapse Argief en die Koopmans-De Wet-Huis, die rouborde van die Grootte Kerk en ander heraldiese bronne in binne-*

before producing *Heraldry of South African families*. He repeats his error from *Die wapens...* The top third of the shield omitted in Bells drawing either metamorphoses into a new coat of arms or it is an attempt to correct an earlier error. The result is not clear. “Bell also mentions (but did not draw) on a chief or a demi double-headed eagle displayed sable.”³⁶ The commemorative medal marking the silver wedding anniversary shows the shield unmutilated, all parts correctly reunited and in accordance with Bell’s blazon as given in his notes.

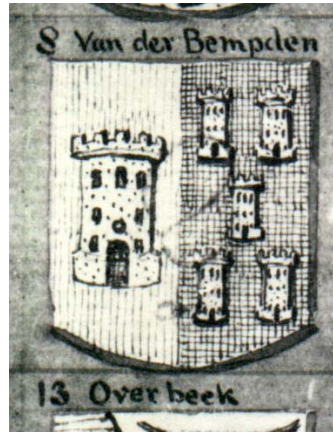
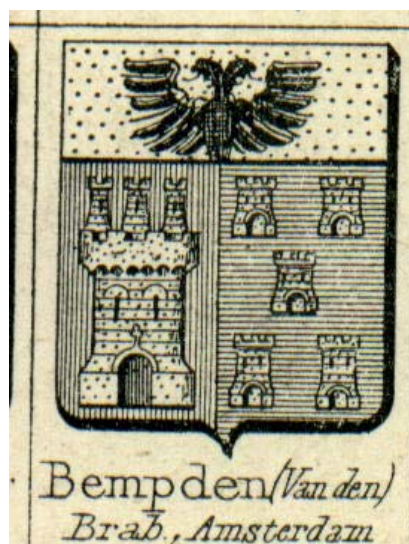


Figure 7 - Van den Bempden arms (Source: Bell-Krynauw BK8).



en buiteland, (Balkema, Kaapstad, 1959), p. 46. In footnote 219, Pama comments on the incompleteness of the coat of arms and mentions that the chief is missing.

36. C. PAMA, *Heraldry of South African families / Coats of arms, crests, ancestry*, (Balkema, Cape Town, 1972) p. 37.

Figure 8 - Van den Bempden arms (Source: Rolland).

It can thus be seen that a study of these commemorative family medals is of importance to art historians, iconographers, genealogists and heralds. The limited available examples show what valuable information these medals can reveal to the South African researcher. Iconographers now have a portrait of Cornelia Six to compare with that of her cousin Aletta Bax-Hinloopen as illustrated in *Masters of the castle*. There is a wealth of genealogical and heraldic information that can be used to resolve related problems. Unfortunately, the number of medals with a Cape-Dutch connection is very small and one can only speculate whether further examples were lost over time. The majority of those recorded seem to have been found either in open collections or sale catalogues. There may still be others in private hands.

Opsomming

Familie gedenkpenninge in die VOC-periode

Daar is 'n interessante tradisie wat in vroeër eeue in Nederland en Nederlandse kolonies voorgekom het. Dit was die gebruik om gedenkpenninge (familiepenninge) uit te gee om familiegebeure, van die wieg tot die graf, te vier. Meeste penninge hou verband huwelike en huwelikshedenkings. Daar is ook heelwat wat betrekking het op begrafnisse, waar dit amper as rougeld gedien het. Die praktyk is tipies Nederlands, maar die gebruik word ook in 'n mate in die Protestante stede van Noord-Duitsland gevind. Navorsing oor hierdie penninge is interdisiplinêr. Dit vereis kundigheid in kunsgeskiedenis, ikonografie, genealogie en heraldiek.

J.W. Frederiks, Penninge. Amsterdam, 1947. [publ. Allert de Lange]

A.J. Bemolt van Loghum Slaterus, Nederlandse familiepenninge tot 1813.

Zutphen, 1981 [not my book - in Tukkies Library - I am not driving for two hours to get a publisher's name]

D. Bax, Het oudste Kaapse zilver 1669-1751, Amsterdam, 1974

[Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, Afd. Letterkunde, Nieuwe reeks, Deel 86; publ. B.V. Noord-Hollandsche Uitgewers Maatschappij]

J.B. Rietstap, Armorial Général. Gouda, 2nd ed., n.d. Volume 1 [publ. G.R. van Goor Zonen]

V. Rolland, Armoiries des familles contenues dans l'Armorial général de J. B. Rietstap. Paris, 1903-1926 (6 volumes) [publ. L'Institut Héraldique Universel]

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