

## The common ancestor and the branches of the Snethlage Family

### Preface

In the introduction on the website to the history of the family Snethlage a short description is given about the origin and the development of the family.

Here we will try to be more specific.

In the same way as the biography of every person is interesting, so it is the same with the history of each family, that is to say the history and development of a family through the course of time. Problem is that we don't know in general very much about the persons who formed the family during many generations.

This article has therefore no more pretention than to give a sketch of the development of the family against the background of the time.

### The common ancestor

Wilhelm(us) Snethlage<sup>1</sup>, (1565-1650)<sup>2</sup> is not only the common ancestor of all the members of the Snethlage Family, he is as well the eldest one to whom we can go back. We don't know who his parents were. Probably he is a (illegitimate) descendant of the noble family Von Snetlage.

In 1588 he became the headmaster of the Latin School in Tecklenburg, the capital of the County of the same name in what is now part of Westfalen in the West of Germany. Since 1589 he was also authorized to preach there in the local Protestant church and in 1594 he became as well one of the two church ministers. In 1627 he moved as church minister to Cappeln (now Westerkappeln), also in the County of Tecklenburg



### The political and religious situation in the time of the common ancestor

To have better understanding in which world Wilhelmus Snethlage and his family lived it might be useful to analyse the political and religious situation of the time.

The county of Tecklenburg was one of the many states (ruled by their own dukes and counts) within the German Empire. On this map of Europe in the 16<sup>th</sup> century can be seen how extensive this realm was. The Netherlands formed part of it as well. Head of the Realm was the (Habsburg) Emperor. The Habsburgs also had themselves their own territories (pink coloured on the map).

The counts of Tecklenburg ruled as well in the adjacent County of Lingen and in the free Barony of Rheda. They supported the Reformation and introduced it in 1524 in their territories. Count Koenraad of Tecklenburg (the last of the "House" of Schwerin) joined the Schmalkaldic Alliance, the

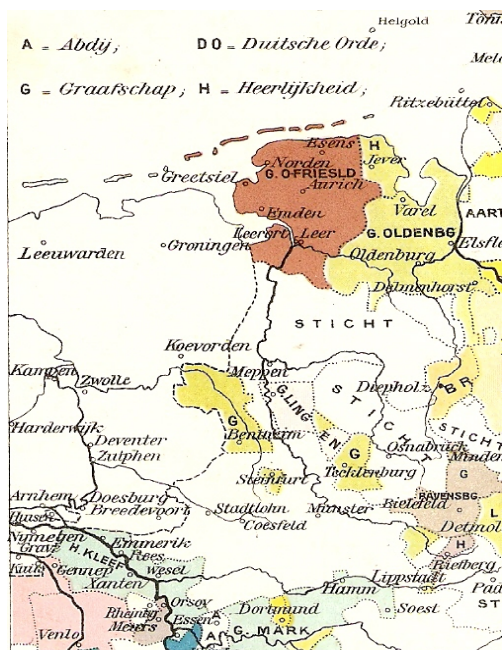
alliance of the Protestant sovereigns. After his death in 1557 he was succeeded by Count

<sup>1</sup> Here the spelling of the surname is harmonized to Snethlage. However, until the 18<sup>th</sup> century many variations are used. The Christian names were regularly latinised; in the article there has been made a choice.

<sup>2</sup> For more exact dates, names and other members of the family see the genealogy.

Everwijn III of Bentheim, who was married with his daughter. So Tecklenburg (with Rheda) and Bentheim had from then on the same ruler. Lingen was in that time already separated. About this a bit more later on. The succession in Tecklenburg was contested by the Count of Solms, who was married with a sister of Count Koenraad; prolonged lawsuits would follow. The son of Count Everwijn, Count Arnold II of Bentheim and Tecklenburg, changed in 1588 from Lutheranism to Calvinism.

The end of the conflict about the succession in Tecklenburg between the Counts of Bentheim and of Soms did not come before the beginning of the 18th century. First Solms won and thereafter Bentheim, but then the Count of Solms had already sold the county of Tecklenburg to the King of Prussia. So there was made an agreement, and Tecklenburg stayed under Prussia and Bentheim got Rheda.



Lingen was after the Schmalkaldic War, at first together with Tecklenburg, deprived by the Emperor Charles V from Count Koenraad and given to Maximilian of Egmond, Count of Buren, the later father-in-law of Prince William of Orange. Maximilian concluded then in 1548 a treaty with Count Koenrad and kept Lingen, but returned Tecklenburg to Koenraad. Charles V recognised this. Later Lingen came to William of Orange and, after a couple of political complications, to Prince Frederik Hendrik of Orange and stayed in the possession of the Oranges until it came after the dead of the Stadholder-King William III, because of the partition of his inheritance, to Prussia.

The territories in the Netherlands had originally their own rulers, such as the Counts of Holland, the Counts, later Dukes of Guelderland and the Dukes of Brabant, but because of marriages and compulsion they came finally all under the rule of the same

rulers, the Burgunds, later the Habsburgs. These established common administrations, and thus laid down the basis of the political unity of The Netherlands.

However, at the end of the 16th century the situation was changing again. For religious and economic reasons the so called Eighty Years War started in 1568 and in 1581 seven provinces of the (Northern) Netherlands declared that they did not more recognise Filips II, the son of Charles V and himself King of Spain and sovereign of the Netherlands, as their legal ruler. With that the separation of the Northern and the Southern Netherlands was a fact, were the land-frontiers of what is now "Nederland" in main lines fixed and had a Calvinistic state come into being on the western border of Germany.

Meanwhile, the time stayed restless. Groningen was reconquered by the Spanish troops of Filips II in 1590, Prince William of Orange was murdered in 1584 and the (rather decisive) Battle of Newport (1600) had to come yet. With the Peace of Munster in 1648 the Netherlands were officially recognised. Then there came as well an end to the Religious Wars in the German Realm.

### Consequences for the family

What is now of these historic developments of interest for the position of our family ?

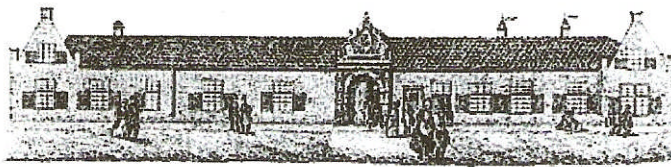
- In the first place it strikes the attention that Wilhelmus appeared in 1588 in Tecklenburg, the year that Count Arnold II and with him the County of Tecklenburg became Calvinistic.

And in a small county like Tecklenburg the count will certainly have had the last word about his appointment.

Probably Wilhelmus will have studied at a university of Calvinistic “cut”. Unfortunately we don’t know which one, otherwise we should have had maybe an indication about his place of origin, since such is usually registered in the “Album Studios rum”. But not all the Alba Studios rum are kept or published, and neither the registrations are not always complete.

- It is clear that in a time that the differences between Lutheran and Calvinistic were stricter than nowadays, the orientation from the German Calvinistic front-territories will be, certainly for theologians, directed to the nearby Calvinistic Dutch Republic, which was more and more consolidated. Although Groningen was, as mentioned before, reconquered in 1580 by the Spanish, in 1594 the town and the province returned definitively in the hands of the Republic. In 1614 the University of Groningen was founded and this was for the German front-territories the nearest Calvinistic university. Already in 1615 Samuel Snethlage, the eldest son of Wilhelmus, was registered there. In the first generations of the family, most students, also from the German branch, would follow their studies there. Even later, until far in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, many German Snethlages would study in The Netherlands, as well in Franeker, Leiden, Utrecht and Harderwijk.

## Groningen



Het eerste Academiegebouw dat in 1846 werd afgebroken

- That the (Calvinistic) religion was quite directing in that time can be seen from the fact that the Snethlages spread from the Calvinistic county Tecklenburg just to the county Bentheim, to Rheda and to the Republic, all Calvinistic as well and to the counties Lingen (which stayed in majority Catholic) and Mörs (Meurs) near Duisburg, both, until the death of the Stadholder-King William III, in the possession of the family of Orange.

- Remarkable is the continuity of the Protestant ministry. However, it should be considered that in former times there was in general more tradition in the professions. Later in this article a bit more will follow about the minister-character of the family.

- The transition of the county Tecklenburg to Prussia will not have brought immediately great changes in the careers of the living Snethlages, but possible on the longer term it had. For instance it can have contributed to the appeal in 1802 on Dr Bernhard Mauritz Snethlage, the common ancestor of the actual German Snethlages, to come to Berlin as principal of the Gymnasium.

### **The household of the common ancestor**

Wilhelmus married in 1592 Margaretha Rump (1569-1632), the daughter of Dietrich (Theodor) Rump<sup>3</sup>, the senior of the two Protestant ministers in Tecklenburg.

This alliance turned out to be important for the Snethlages. The family Rump was well settled in the County, with also in the coming generations many church ministers and other notables, or related to them.

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<sup>3</sup> The Christian names Theodor and Dietrich were in the older times used through each other, as both derived from Theodorik.

For us it is important as well that two Rump's published about the history of the County, and therein as well about the Snethlages<sup>4</sup>.

The couple Snethlage-Rump had eight children, four sons and four daughters. Three of the sons studied in Groningen; it is not known where the second son, Wilhelm, studied. The eldest son became headmaster of the Latin School in Appingedam (Groningen), the other three all church minister, one in the county Tecklenburg, one in first the county Bentheim, later in Drenthe (Netherlands) and the youngest in the county Bentheim. One of the daughters stayed unmarried, two married with church ministers in the County Tecklenburg and one with a man of whom we don't know the profession (but the son became church minister).

When we look at the grandchildren, we see that on the one hand a tradition of Protestant clergymen has arisen and on the other hand that some geographic spreading is developing which causes the separate development of the three branches.

Hereunder follows, in order to make this all a bit more visible, a concise schedule of the first three generations of the family (the adult men and the number of adult daughters).

[abbreviations: T = county Tecklenburg, B= county Bentheim, L= county Lingen, R= barony Rheda, M = county Meurs, NL = Netherlands. Ds = Dominus, Reverend, predik. (predikant) = church minister, stud.= student, ongeh.(ongehuwd) = unmarried, tak(je) = (little) branch.

**Table I**

Ds Wilhelm(us), 1565-1650 rector en predik. Tecklenburg (T), predik. Westerkappeln (T) x Margaretha Rump										
	Samuel 1595-1648/49 stud. Groningen, priv.docent, leraar Gymn. Harderwijk, rector Lat.school Appingedam (NL) (ongeh.)	Ds Wilhelm 1600-1677 predik. Osterberg, Leeden, Lotte, Tecklenburg, Lienen (alle T) x Christophilia Saatkamp	Ds Johannes 1609-1672 stud. Groningen, predik. Brandlecht (B), Roden (NL), Peize (NL) x 2 <sup>e</sup> Trijntje Ebbinge	Ds Rudolph(us) Theodor(us) 1613-1679 stud. Groningen, predik. Ladbergen (B), Rheda (R ), Schüttorf (B) , Steinfurt (B), tevens conrector gymnasium x 1 <sup>e</sup> Adelheid Sutoris	4 drs					
Wilhelm 1622/23- 1661 jur. stud Gronin- gen (ongeh.)	Ds Alhard(us) Theodor(us) 1629-1710 stud. Bremen, Basel, Gronin- gen, predik. Westerkappeln (T), Lengerich (L), Lienen T) x Katharina Bauer	2 drs	Ds Wilhelmus 1654-1731 stud.Meurs, Groningen, predik. Westerbork (NL) x 1 <sup>e</sup> Jantje Wolters 2 <sup>e</sup> Maria van der Veen	Ds Samuel 1656-1684 stud. Groningen, predik. Peize (NL) x Johanna Hebelia Halfwassenius	2 drs	F	Ds Samuel 1642-1704 stud. Groningen, predik. Schapen (L), x Engele Staverman	Ds Rudolphus 1651-1729 stud. Gro- ningen, predik. Oosterwijtwert (NL), Steinfurt (B), Deventer (NL) x Anna Christina Hundius	1 dr	
	<b>tak A</b> (Duitse tak)		<b>tak B</b> (Drents-Friese tak)				<b>tak C</b> (Gelderse tak)	kinderen (†)		

<sup>4</sup> Gerhardus Arnoldus Rumpius : Das Heiligen Römischen Reichs uhralte hochlöbliche Graffschafft Tekelenburg, Bremen 1672 (fascimilé-print Hamburg 1935) and Gerhard Wilhelm Rump: a manuscript (started in 1738) which in 1938, revised by Hans Krusy, was published in Leipzig.

## Further developments of the branches in the next generations

### *Branch A, the German branch*

This branch would split after Alhard Theodor in a branch which produced two generations of clergymen in Tecklenburg and a branch which would serve during three succeeding generations more in Lienen, also in the County Tecklenburg. The last branch became extinct in the 19th century.

The first branch was split in its turn in a line that went to Amsterdam, but became extinct in the 19th century, and a line which lives on until now. The common ancestor of all the Snethlages of the German branch is Dr Bernhard Mauritz (Moritz) Snethlage (1753-1840), who after studies in The Netherlands and a governorship there became the headmaster/principal of first the gymnasium in Hamm and later in Berlin. Hereunder again a concise scheme.

Abbreviations as at Table I, and further: koopman = merchant, nageslacht = progeny, apotheker = pharmacist, belastingontvanger = tax collector, houtvester = forester

Ds Alhard(us) Theodor(us), 1629-1710 (zie Tabel I)								Tabel II
Ds Wilhelm Berhhard 1656-1711 predik. Tecklenburg		Dr Gerhard Christoph 1658-1711 Kon. Pruis. Advocaat- Generaal Gfsch. Tecklenburg		Dietrich Hinrich (leger-) kapitein	Ds Eberhard Samuel 1670-1733 predik. Lienen		Christoffer ca. 1675-na 1722 koopman Bremen	
Ds Johann Dietrich 1705-1750 predik. Wersen		Ds Gerhard Bernhard 1707-1763 predik. Tecklenburg		Friedrich 1696-1728 koopman Riga (dr ?)	Ds Andreas Wilhelm 1698-1770 predik. Lienen		Samuel Hermann Rudolf 1700-1773 theol.cand. belasting- ontvanger Lienen	2 zonen, koopman Riga (†)
Johann Dietrich (Johan Diederik) 1744-1819 apotheker Amsterdam	Ludwig Dietrich 1742- 1811 luitenant (ongeh.)	Dr Leonhard Wilhelm, 1742-1812, priv.docent Halle lector Göttingen, Berlijn (kinderloos)		Dr Bernhard Mauritz 1753-1840 rector gymnasium Hamm, Berlijn	Goswin Samuel Wilhelm 1738-na 1797 ambtmann Lengerich, Freren (drs)	Friedrich Andreas 1745-1815 predik. Lienen (kinderloos)	Ds Johann Samuel 1757- 1811 predik. Minden (ongeh.)	Friedrich Samuel Rudolf 1740-1800 houtvester, Führer Lienen (ongeh., 2 erkende kinderen)
Johan Diederik 1774-1805 apotheker Amsterdam (kinderloos)		Adolf Carl Leonhard 1786-1856 Kgl. Ingenieur- Hauptmann (dr)		Ludwig Friedrich Wilhelm 1786-1821 ambtenaar mijnwezen Hörde (takje, †)	Dr Emil Heinrich Christian Jakob 1790-1871 Prof. Gymnasium Berlijn (nageslacht)		Dr Karl Wilhelm Moritz 1792-1871 predik. Baerl, Barmen, Berlijn (nageslacht)	

During the 17th and 18th century the German branch stayed in the County Tecklenburg as part of the close connected families of church ministers and other notables there - with only some expansion to Amsterdam and Bremen/Riga, but from the beginning of the 19th century the family became with the arrival of Bernhard Mauritz in Berlin "general German". After

World War II many members who lived in the parts of Germany which became East-Germany or Poland came to West-Germany.

There would follow some more church ministers during the 19th century and as last one the only female Snethlage who became a church minister, Helene Snethlage (1908-1993), but the overall picture becomes that of a general notable family. Special for the German branch is that they counted also some army officers and members who were (even artistic !) involved in the agricultural world.

### **Branch B, the Drents-Frisian Branch**

Of the three sons of Wilhelmus, the second generation in Drenthe, the eldest succeeded his father as church minister in Westerbork, whereas the two younger sons went to Amsterdam, as candle maker and sugar baker. Their descendants would become extinct in the 18th, resp. 19th century, but the name Snethlage was kept even longer because of the “snetlaagje”, a formerly well-known biscuit (see the story on the website). In the still existing older sub-branch the church ministry stayed dominant for many more generations. With the arrival of Albertus (1727-1796) in 1768 as church minister in Leeuwarden, the accent of this branch moved to Friesland. His youngest son, Jacobus Martinus (1777-1846), church minister last in Goutum, is the common ancestor of the actual members of this branch. A short scheme follows.

(abbrev.: burgem(eeste)r= mayor, rentm.r.=steward)

Ds Wilhelmus, 1654-1731 (zie tabel I)

**Tabel III**

Ds Johannes 1688-1751 predik. Westerbork	Samuel 1690-1750 mr.kaarsenmaker Amsterdam (kinderen †)	Jan (van der Veen) 1698-1738 suikerbakker Amsterdam	
Ds Johannes Wilhelmus 1725-1771 koopman Vries/Roden, verv. predik. O.-Indië	Ds Albertus 1727-1796 predik. Ijsselmuiden, Zwijndrecht, Purmerend, Leeuwarden	Ds Wilhelmus 1729-1781 predik. Odoorn, Zwijndrecht	takje Amsterdam/ Den Haag, tevens VOC †

Ds Hendricus 1748-1791 predik. Ambon	zonen VOC †	Ds David 1755-1820 predik Tjalleberd/ Aengwirden, Deil	Ds Nicolaas Jan 1770- 1826 predik. Oppen- huizen, Bozum (ongeh.)	Ds Jan Willem 1771-1846 predik. Oudwoude, Augustinusga	Ds Jacobus Martinus 1777-1846 predik. Hijlaard, Oenkerk, Goutum	Ds Johannes 1757-1840 predik. Odoorn, Coevorden, Maastricht, Leer, Pieterburen  (kinderloos)	Ds Fredericus 1759-1825 predik. Peize, Leens, Ditzum, Den Andel  (kinderloos)	Henricus Lambertus 1774-? woont Zwijndrecht  (1 dr)
		Johan Willem Ferdinand 1789-1868 rentmeester Mariënwaard, burgemr. Beesd (takje,†)		Jan Foppes 1803-1863 theol. stud., ontvanger directe belastingen Roordahuizum, Tjerkwerd, Leek (3 drs)	Ds Albertus 1811-1889 predik. Hijlaard, Boxum c.s. (nageslacht)		Anne Noordenbos 1814-1849 genees-, heel- en vroedmeester Oostdongeradeel (nageslacht)	

This branch had the longest continuity of church ministry. With the decease of Jacobus

Martinus (1904-1991) ended at a range of clergymen during nearly 400 years. Also in this branch the picture becomes that of a general notable family. hereunder a couple of physicians, but an until the last generations continued tradition did not arise. The eldest sub-branch would become extinct, but lives partly on in the female line under the name Fuhri Snethlage. From the same sub-branch several members went to the East Indies, as was the case with some descendants of the sugar baker. However, most of them died young there, unfortunately. The descendants of Anne Noordenbos Snethlage are, except one female member, established in Canada.

**Branch C, the Gelderse branch**

When looking at Table I this branch can really not yet be qualified as Gelders. The Gelders element starts when, in 1713, Philip Jacob Snethlage (1681/82-1762) comes as church minister to Laren (Gld.). From there he goes in 1724 as church minister to Hengelo (Gld.). With his sons the branch splits up in a sub-branch in Hengelo ( extinct) and a sub-branch that comes via Varsseveld in Dinxperlo. All members of this branch are descendants of the Dinxperlo church minister Rudolph Abraham Iduard Snethlage (1766-1844). It delivers the following picture. Abbrev.: mr (meester) = Master of Law, rechter =judge, raadsheer = judge higher court

Ds Samuel, 1642-1704 (zie Tabel I)			<b>Tabel IV</b>	
Rudolph Abraham 1674/75-1704 apotheker Amsterdam (kinderloos)	Ds Henricus Wilhelmus 1678-1733 predik. Schapen (Lingen) (kinderloos)	Ds Philip Jacob 1681/82-1753 predik. Laren (Gld) en Hengelo (Gld)		
Ds Samuel Jan 1733-1801 predik. Hengelo (Gld)	Mr Henrik Herman 1734-1805 advocaat Zutfen, ontvanger verpondingen Zelhem, wonend Varsseveld			
Mr Philip Jacob 1760-1797 advocaat-fiscaal Kwartier van Zutfen, landschrijver	Ds Rutger Tobias 1761-1823 predik. Everdingen Bredevoort en Hengelo (Gld)	Ds Rudolph Abraham Iduard 1766-1844 predik. Dinxperlo		
Mr Samuel Johan 1794-1830 griffier rechtbank Zutfen  (kinderen, †)	Mr Bernard Gutberlet 1803-1869 griffier Rb. Zutfen raadsheer Gerechtshof Arnhem (ongetrouwd)	Ds Hendrik Carel Samuel 1802-1872 predik. Dinxperlo (nageslacht)	Ds Rudolph Abraham Engelbart 1815-1889 predik. Arkel, Echteld (als emeritus Zutfen) (nageslacht)	Adolph Carel Lodewijk 1818-1865 koopvaardij- kapitein, koopman Gendringen (nageslacht)

When we look at the table, we can see that the picture has become really Gelders now. But we also can see that there is - as is the case with the other branches - an element of chance in this. Should his two older brothers have had descendants, the development would probably have been totally different. Otherwise, the eldest of them, Rudolph Abraham, lives on

because his nephew Rudolph Abraham Iduard was named after him and his wife Ida Wiltschut and thereafter many descendants of the branch wear these Christian names. Worth mentioning is that three generations of this branch have been in succession church minister in Hengelo (Gld.), from 1724 to 1823. After that the next generation would live there, in their house Het Hof (see separate article on the website) until the decease of the last of them in 1894.

The church ministry stopped first in this branch. The brothers Hendrik Carel Samuel and Rudolph Abraham Engelbart (see the scheme bottom right) were the last. Several members of the branch went to East India and there were as well a number of naval officers. The descendants of the youngest sub-branch (from Gendringen) stayed as last of the branch in Guelderland, until far in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

***Before closing this part about the branches,*** hereunder the common ancestors of the actual descendants of the three branches



Dr Bernhard Mauritz (Moritz)  
Snethlage (1753-1840)  
(Duitse tak)



Ds Jacobus Martinus Snethlage  
(1777-1846)  
(Drents-Friese tak)



Ds Rudolph Abraham Iduard Snethlage  
(1766-1844)  
met echtgenote Engelina P. Boland  
(Gelderse tak)

### **A family of church ministers**

In the preceding the character of the family as one of church ministers has already been addressed. It is one of the first elements that strikes the attention when viewing the genealogy of the family and in this article displayed tables. In Germany they were first “reformierte” (Calvinistic) clergymen. Later they served in the Deutsche Evangelische Kirche (de united church of Lutherans and Calvinists). In The Netherlands they served the Dutch Reformed Church (now called after a merger, as well with the Lutherans, the Protestant Church in the Netherlands). In total 51 Snethlages served as church ministers. Above that, four Snethlages studied theology, but didn’t become church minister: one died as a student, two filled another function and one, a woman, studied in the time that women couldn’t become church minister and became first an assistant minister and then teacher. Two members of the German branch, who were no theologian, became Dr.hon. causa in theology and two members followed non university courses in religious teaching and worked in that area. Finally can be mentioned that two young members of the German branch, whose father had become Roman-Catholic because of his mother, were in 2011 ordained as R.-C. priest.

In the part about the Gelders branch is already memorized that in Hengelo (Gld.) three generations Snethlage were in succession church minister, in Germany even five generations followed each other as church minister in Lienen. Also in Westerbork and Dinxperlo there was succession of the father by the son and in Zwijndrecht it was a brother who succeeded. Moreover there were several places where, with intervals, Snethlages served as church minister, such as Tecklenburg, (Burg-)Steinfurt, Schapen, Peize, Meurs (Mörs), Odoorn, Hijlaard, Amsterdam and Berlin.

There are more families of church ministers, but the impression of the undersigned is that the family Snethlage is really quite priestly !



**Finally, concluding**

The family Snethlage has been from her “start” in the German border areas predominantly a family of church ministers. The three branches developed further in de regions of the German borderland, Drenthe/Friesland and Guelderland. All the three branches lost their regional character during the 19th century and became more widespread. Also the dominance of the church ministry disappeared slowly but steadily since the 19th century. At the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the last two church ministers of the family deceased..

All three branches have descendants abroad, especially in Canada, South Africa and the United States of America, but as well here and there.

It can be concluded that in the course of the centuries the family stayed as a whole on the same social level. Of course the one individual or little branch had more success in the world than the other, but big and lasting ups or downs did not arise.

Albert Snethlage, November 2012